The ספר הזהר ZOHAR

PRITZKER EDITION

XII

Zoharic Compositions

Translation and Commentary by

NATHAN WOLSKI
and JOEL HECKER

ספר הזהר

The ספר הזהר

ZOHAR

Pritzker Edition

VOLUME TWELVE

Translation and Commentary by

Nathan Wolski and Joel Hecker

DANIEL C. MATT, GENERAL EDITOR

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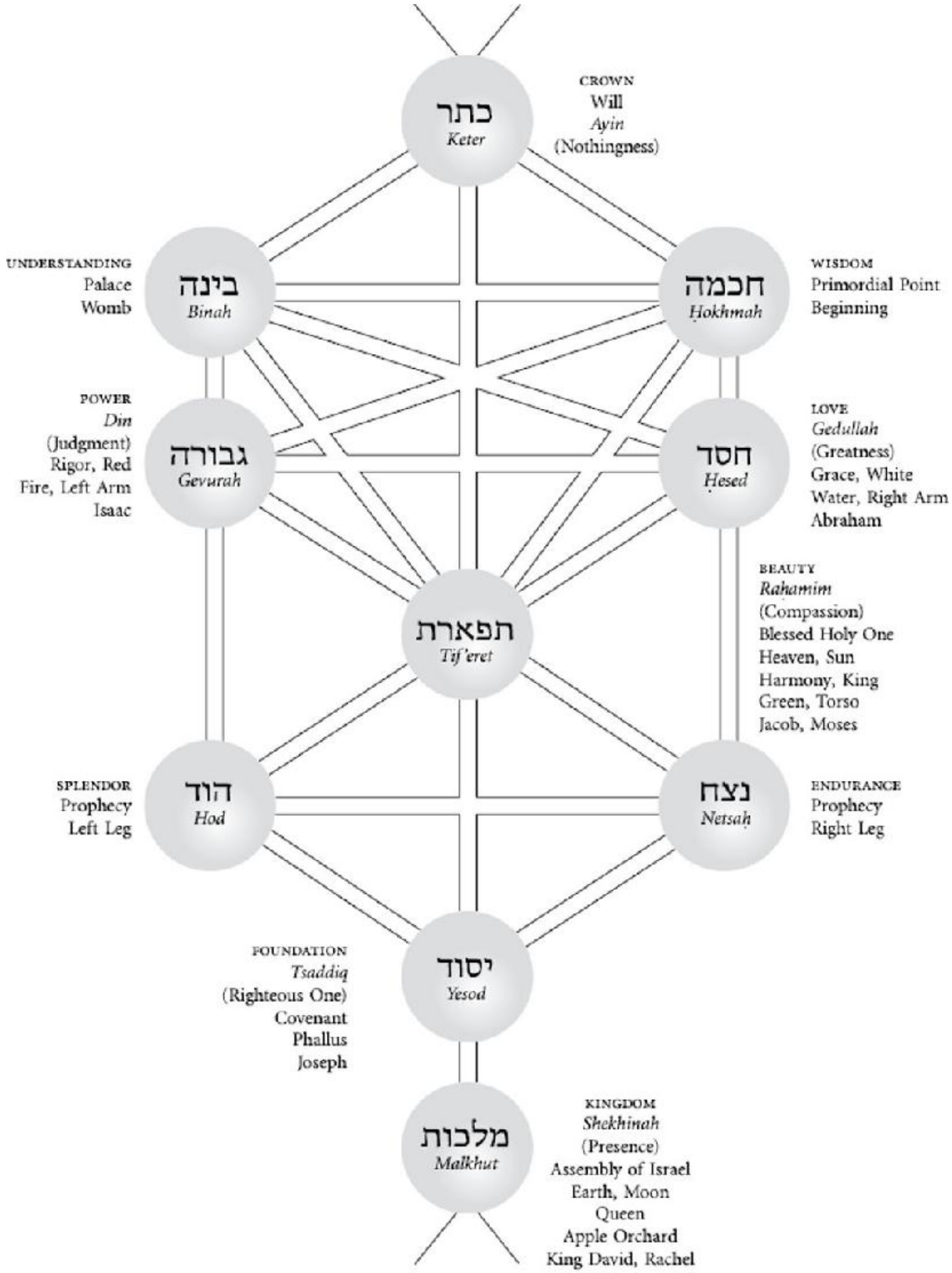

The Ten Sefirot

Preface

More than twenty years ago, Margot Pritzker dreamed up the idea of having the *Zohar* translated into English.[1] This twelfth volume of *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition* completes the realization of her dream.

When the *Zohar* was about to be printed for the very first time, in Italy in the middle of the sixteenth century—in two different cities (Cremona and Mantua) by two competing publishers—a controversy raged as to whether this holy text should be printed at all. Should the deepest secrets of Torah be made available to just anyone? Didn't exposure to the *Zohar* require prior fluency in Bible, Talmud, and Midrash? Somebody who delved into these mystical teachings without the prerequisites, or at too young of an age or with an unstable psyche, might suffer the fate of one of the three colleagues of Rabbi Akiva who ventured long ago into the orchard of secret wisdom. Whereas Rabbi Akiva "entered in peace and emerged in peace," the other three were far less fortunate: one became a heretic, one died, and one "glimpsed and was wounded."[2]

However, the first publishers proceeded, with the approval of various rabbinic authorities. Relying on statements in later strata of the *Zohar*, they believed that their bold act of publication would stimulate Messianic redemption.[3]

I hope that by making the *Zohar* accessible to English readers, we can at least achieve several more modest goals. First, to uncover a gem of world literature, which for centuries was hidden in enigmatic Aramaic. Second, to

transmit the wisdom of Kabbalah, according to which God is Infinity—yet also female and male—and the human being is challenged to actualize the divine potential here and now. Third, to demonstrate how the *Zohar* penetrates the surface layer of Torah to reveal new-ancient depths, and to stimulate readers to ponder these deeper meanings and then explore and discover on their own.

I was blessed with the task of composing the first nine volumes of *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition*, covering the *Zohar*'s main commentary on the Torah. My colleagues Nathan Wolski and Joel Hecker have continued superbly, composing Volumes 10–12, which include numerous other sections of the *Zohar*, described in their prefaces to these three volumes.

As this final volume appears, I wish to thank, first of all, Margot Pritzker, for inviting me to undertake this amazing journey and for conceiving, sponsoring, sustaining, and guiding the immense project. Her passion for learning and her delight in Torah inspired me along the way, and the depth of her commitment stimulated my own. Thank you, Margot, for providing me with the unique opportunity to delve into one of the most wondrous books ever written and to convey its radiant wisdom.

From the gestation of this project, Rabbi Yehiel Poupko has conducted it skillfully and fervently. Descended from a famous kabbalist, the *Shelah* (Isaiah Horowitz), he is intimately bound to the *Zohar* and has devoted himself to spreading its light. I thank him for treasuring the sacred nature of this bold venture.

Glen Miller, vice president of Zohar Education Project, Inc., has vitalized this adventure through his vision and devotion. Over the years, he has navigated the ark of *Zohar* through numerous administrative passageways. Beyond his financial and legal acumen, he demonstrates a profound appreciation of the *Zohar*'s wisdom.

For the past twenty years, Thomas J. Pritzker has generously supported this endeavor. Perhaps it is no coincidence that a man who avidly explores caves to discover ancient Asian art should fund the translation of the *Zohar*—which features stories such as this: “One day I was walking in the desert along with Rabbi Yehudah of Acre, and we entered a certain cave and found there an ancient book from olden days….” Moreover, according to tradition, the *Zohar* itself was composed in a cave.[4]

Arthur Green, as co-chair of the Academic Committee for the Translation of the *Zohar*, has helped to guide this project from its birth. I am grateful for his insight and advice, and for modeling how to blend scholarship with spirituality.

Throughout this long journey, the work of Yehuda Liebes has proven invaluable, as is evident from the frequent appearance of his name in the notes to each volume. Everyone who delves into the *Zohar* today is—or should be—his student.

I wish to thank Ronit Meroz, whose work has dramatically advanced the study of the manuscripts and text of the *Zohar*. She has generously shared with me the data that she has collected relating to hundreds of these manuscripts, along with her analysis. Her research has provided me with a panoramic perspective on the manuscripts, helping me to determine their reliability.

Melila Hellner-Eshed has offered valuable suggestions and enthusiastic encouragement. Walking with her in both Jerusalem and Berkeley, sharing insights into *Zohar*, has been a joy.

Daniel Abrams has generously offered his expertise in a number of areas, including the evolution of the text and strata of the *Zohar*, the analysis of *Zohar* manuscripts, and even technical issues of design and formatting.

The team at Stanford University Press has worked devotedly and indefatigably to produce all twelve volumes

of *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition*. I want to thank especially Mariana Raykov, Alan Harvey, Geoffrey Burn, Norris Pope, and Robert Ehle. Rabbi David E. S. Stein's superb copyediting and erudition have polished this *Book of Radiance*.

I am grateful as well to Merav Carmeli, who has combed Aramaic manuscripts of the *Zohar*, preparing lists of variant readings. This precious material enabled me to establish a critical Aramaic text, upon which the translation is based.

I want to thank Jonatan Benarroch, who performed the same task for Nathan Wolski and Joel Hecker, as they worked on Volumes 10–12. He also prepared digital copies and precise lists of numerous *Zohar* manuscripts.

The critical Aramaic text corresponding to the twelve volumes of *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition* is available on the website of Stanford University Press. My brother, Rabbi Jonathan Matt, has kindly and meticulously edited a user-friendly version of this text.[5]

My wife, Ḥana, and I have been delving together into the *Zohar* ever since we met, discovering and sharing its new-ancient meanings, gazing into each other's souls through its penetrating lens. Thank you, Ḥana, for your compassionate wisdom and unfailing support, for your boundless, joyous nature. You embody the verse in Proverbs (31:26): *On her tongue, a Torah of love*. You confirm the words of Rabbi El'azar (in *Zohar* 1:141a): "Isaac embraced faith, seeing *Shekhinah* dwelling in his wife."

Finally, to the One beyond all names: Blessed are You for enlivening and sustaining us, and for bringing us to this moment.

D.C.M.

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1. See Vol. 1, pp. xiii, xxvii.

2. See Vol. 9, pp. 791–92, n. 74.

3. See, e.g., *Zohar* 3:124b (*RM*): “Because [the people of] Israel are destined to taste of this Tree of Life, namely this *Book of Zohar*, they will thereby come forth from exile through [divine] compassion.”

4. See Vol. 9, pp. 314–19 and n. 59.

5. The site is www.sup.org/zohar. For a description of the various online versions of the critical text, see the website. For the translators’ methodology in constructing this text, see the website and Volume 1, “Translator’s Introduction,” pp. xv–xviii.

Introduction

NATHAN WOLSKI AND JOEL HECKER

This volume presents a variety of Zoharic texts, reflecting the range of genres within the Zoharic library. Many of these sections appear in *Zohar Ḥadash*, or *New Zohar*; this title is a misnomer, however, since the volume comprises some of the earliest Zoharic material. Other than the masterly study and partial translation of *Sitrei Otiyyot* by Steven Wald, the vast majority of the material in this volume appears here in English for the first time.[1]

The first two chapters of this volume present the *Zohar*'s treatment of the *Heikhalot*—the heavenly palaces or halls. Traditionally printed in *parashat Be-Reshit* (1:38a–45b) and *parashat Pequdei* (2:244b–268b), the *Heikhalot* of the *Zohar* describe a mystical praxis of worship. In this praxis, the prayer of an adept will pass through and unify a series of celestial halls. The halls' unification then paves the way for the union of Divinity's male and female aspects, culminating in a reinvigorating flow of divine being from within Divinity's deepest recesses and out to the created world.

In the classical *Heikhalot* corpus of Antiquity, the seventh and last hall is the abode of the Throne of Glory, the beholding of which constitutes the pinnacle of the mystic's quest. Though indebted to that literature in other respects (the heavenly architecture, the hosts of angels, the quest of the soul, etc.), the *Zohar* reimagines the *Heikhalot* of old through the lens of its own innovative theosophical worldview, resulting in a new and dynamic picture of reality.

Located beneath *Malkhut*—the lowest *sefirah*—the halls are populated by diverse celestial beings, and they mediate and reflect the varied qualities of the *sefirot* with which they are associated. In lavish detail, Rabbi Shim'on[2] outlines the way in which the prayers of the righteous navigate through these halls, uniting them as they proceed, thereby configuring the seventh and highest hall to become the abode of *Malkhut/Shekhinah*. In the *Zohar*'s schema, the halls are imagined as *Malkhut*'s maidens, and in prayer the worshiper arranges and adorns them in preparation for their union with the *sefirot*, and ultimately for the union of the male and female grades of Divinity. In many ways, though, the real story of the *Heikhalot* is the story of *Malkhut* and *Binah*, the binding of "seventh with seventh," as the divine feminine is adorned and arrayed to receive the flow from within the womb of being.

The first version of the *Heikhalot* (in *Be-Reshit*) is much shorter than the second (in *Pequdei*). Though the same basic structure and idea inform both compositions, the second version is far grander in scope (and in detail) than the first. At more than three times the length of the first version, *Heikhalot Pequdei* expands upon the earlier version, with an account of the halls of impurity (which parallel the halls of holiness), a much more intricate angelology, numerous homilies, as well as a much more elaborate theosophy of prayer, as the daily morning liturgy is expounded in intricate detail. Here, then, we encounter a rare phenomenon in the Zoharic world whereby a discrete and complete composition within the Zoharic library receives a second treatment. Although we cannot be certain, it seems more than likely that the same hand is at work in both compositions. Whatever the case may be, there can be no doubt that the author of the second version was familiar with the first, as he cites it verbatim on numerous occasions.

Though *Heikhalot Pequdei* is far grander than its predecessor, *Heikhalot Be-Reshit* by no means pales in comparison with its extended rewrite. Indeed, in *Heikhalot Be-Reshit*, one can perhaps sense with greater clarity and concision the primary experience underlying the mystical ascent through prayer; and it is in *Heikhalot Be-Reshit* that the experience of light—possibly generated through a known technique of rolling one's eyeball—is most acute. Here dynamic imagery abounds, marked by the fusion and integration of lights and spirits. Perhaps one should think of the first version as containing the experiential and ideational core, or road map, to which the author returned later in life, this time with a more expansive brush, to offer a more complete picture of the diverse tiers of being. Be that as it may, the *Heikhalot* of the *Zohar* are best read in sequence and in tandem, comparing the different treatments of individual halls. In reading the *Heikhalot*, one must be especially careful not to get lost in the thicket of details. Filled with diverse lights and celestial beings, it is easy to lose sight of the deep quest of the Zoharic *Heikhalot*—the desire to unify and ascend through the variegated tiers of being, thereby arousing *Ein Sof*, the Infinite, to illuminate all reality. As Rabbi Shim'on himself states at the start of *Heikhalot Pequdei*: "All the arrangements follow a single principle: so that low can be comprised in high" (2:244b).

While rendered here as "hall," both the Hebrew word היכל (*heikhal*) and its Aramaic equivalent היכלא (*heikhala*) contain numerous shades of meaning. The present texts use these terms in a nonspecific manner that simultaneously allows also the senses of "chamber, palace, sanctuary." I have opted for "hall," in part to capture the composition's architectural feel—its depictions of one *heikhal* within another that are linked by a pillar, and that unite (as prayer proceeds) to become a single edifice. More decisive, however, is the implicit structural parallel with the ancient

Temple in Jerusalem. Just as the term *heikhal* designated the entrance hall to the Temple's inner sanctum (e.g., in 1 Kings 6), so in the Zoharic *Heikhalot* do the lower six halls lead into the seventh hall, known as the "Holy of Holies," where *Malkhut* receives the invigorating flow from *Binah*.

The connection between prayer and the heavenly halls is found also in another kabbalistic work—one that preceded the *Zohar* by about two generations. In Rabbi Azriel of Gerona's commentary on the liturgy, nearly all the halls as found in the *Zohar* are mentioned by name, as well as their assignation to a particular *sefirah*, though the treatment there is cursory in comparison. Presumably, then, there were other sources (no longer extant) describing the halls upon which the Zoharic author drew.[3]

The traditional designation of these two compositions, respectively, as *Heikhalot Be-Reshit* and *Heikhalot Pequdei* stems from their location in the Mantua edition of the *Zohar* (1558–60). In the Cremona edition (1559–60), *Heikhalot Pequdei* is likewise embedded within the *Zohar's* commentary to *parashat Pequdei*, whereas what we now call *Heikhalot Be-Reshit* is spread over two *parashot*: the first section (corresponding to *Zohar* 1:38a–41a) in *parashat Be-Reshit*, and the remainder in *parashat Va-Yaqhel* (situated at the equivalent of *Zohar* 2:202b). In Moses Cordovero's version of the *Zohar* in *Or Yaqar, Heikhalot Pequdei* again appears embedded in *parashat Pequdei*, whereas *Heikhalot Be-Reshit* appears in *parashat Terumah*, with the first section of *Heikhalot Be-Reshit* (*Zohar* 1:38a–41a) found also in *parashat Be-Reshit*. Even more diverse arrangements are reflected in the manuscript witnesses. Apparently the *Heikhalot* were once independent and free-standing compositions that only later were attached to particular Torah portions.

Combing through various manuscripts (copied prior to the first published editions of the *Zohar*) has now enabled the inclusion of a previously unpublished "conclusion" to

the seventh hall of holiness in *Heikhalot Pequdei*. This passage (about 1.5 folio sides in length) is most significant in that it explores the prayer postures accompanying the ascent through prayer, a theme found in *Heikhalot Be-Reshit*, though until now, absent from *Heikhalot Pequdei*.

This volume's third chapter, *Piqqudin*, offers a kabbalistic interpretation of select commandments. In standard printed editions of the *Zohar* (which follow the arrangement of the Mantua edition), the *Piqqudin* stratum is found scattered and interspersed among *Ra'aya Meheimna*. As the manuscript witnesses attest, however, the *Piqqudin*, is an independent and integral composition. The work is closely affiliated with the main body of the *Zohar*, as well as Moses de León's *Sefer ha-Rimmon*. It appears here in its original contiguous form for the first time.

The fourth chapter, *Raza de-Razin* (Secret of Secrets), treats the topics of physiognomy (determining temperament, character, and fate from physical appearance), metoposcopy (determination based specifically on lines, marks, and other features of the forehead), and chiromancy (determination based specifically on lines and other marks in the palm and fingers). The presupposition that a person's appearance—mainly one's face—is potentially so revealing rests on the prevalent medieval belief in the science of physiognomy—the explanatory framework for describing and predicting psychological, social, and moral conditions on the basis of visible features. It is based on the deep-seated and apparently cross-cultural human belief that physical features somehow relate to character; examples of this kind of science persisted well into the twentieth century.

Ancient and medieval predecessors approached these topics systematically, outlining principles for interpreting facial features, and providing broad categories with increasing detail that would allow a practitioner to use their

works effectively as manuals. Much of *Raza de-Razin*, in contrast, reads like a physician's clinical notes, brief notations about unusual features and the apparently corresponding characteristics in the person under examination. Each case is presented with considerable detail, whose aggregate is likely to be entirely unique.

The taxonomy is somewhat thin, proceeding through the categories of hair, forehead, eyebrows, eyes, and nose, sometimes incorporating details from the other categories. Details of personality follow, sometimes accompanied by relevant biographical information referring to past sins, including infractions committed by one of the subject's parents.

The clinical descriptions are apparently prognostic—associating particular features with specific character traits. But what distinguishes the Zoharic treatments of physiognomy (and the like) from its predecessors is the stress on the mutability of people's physical features as a direct result of virtuous or sinful behavior. Here we see the *Zohar*'s perennial pietism—perceiving opportunities for greater religious devotion, *teshuvah*, and respectable ethical conduct—manifest in physical form.

Chapter Five is *Sitrei Otiyyot* (Secrets of the Letters), a mystical essay that maps out the emergence of divine and mundane reality from the tetragrammaton, *YHVH*—the very essence of all being. The divine essence is expressed in the letters *YHVH* and these letters are first incised enigmatically in ethereal relief—simultaneously revealed and concealed. As each letter of the tetragrammaton comes into relief, its corresponding "chariot" comes into existence and assumes its station below the letter, to bear and transport it. In this way, the stages of the imagery suggest an incremental emergence of the ineffable name *YHVH*. As the text proceeds, supernal entities (such as chariots, pillars, and *sefirot*) are multiplied through the telescoping of one within the other, producing a vast continuum of spiritual presences.

Chapter Six comprises the treatise called *Qav ha-Middah* (Line of Measure). The work opens by representing itself as a mystical interpretation of the *Shema*, the biblical and liturgical declaration of divine unity, but the text is primarily an esoteric essay that describes the *Qav ha-Middah*, the divine instrument used by God to gauge the mystical overflow to the recondite essences of the ten *sefirot*. This instrument is also called *Botsina de-Qardinuta*, "Lamp of Adamantine Darkness," a luminary so potently brilliant that it overwhelms comprehension. Regarding this instrument, the great sixteenth-century kabbalist Moses Cordovero commented that "… even basic understanding is elusive" (*Pardes Rimmonim* 4:7).

The imagery of a measuring line derives from Jeremiah 31:39, in a description of the future rebuilding of Jerusalem; and Zechariah 2:5 offers a similar image: *I lifted my eyes and I saw, behold, a man; and in his hand was a* מדה חבל (*ḥevel middah*), *measuring rope. 'Where are you going?' I asked. 'To measure Jerusalem,' he replied, 'to see how long and wide it is to be*.' The *Zohar* projects the idealized Jerusalem (based on these verses) from the biblical text, a frequent symbol of *Shekhinah*, onto the most hidden realms of Divinity. In this way the redemption promised in the eschatological Jerusalem is recast as knowledge of the concealed inner processes of God. The text is explicit that the *Qav ha-Middah* is not only an instrument wielded by God to survey the divine dimensions, but also a mystical tool that the kabbalist can use to envision Divinity and participate in the divine emanative process. Indeed, to attain this spark and participate in the primal flow of being is the very goal of meditation.

The *Zohar*'s commentary on *Merkevet Yeḥezqel* (Ezekiel's Chariot) is presented in Chapter Seven, and it elaborates upon and explains the details of the prophet Ezekiel's chariot-vision. Interpretation of the chariot was one of the main genres of kabbalistic writing in the Middle

Ages. The treatment here begins with the description of the four four-faced creatures who support the chariot (or throne). Its underlying thesis is that Divinity and the cosmos comprise a series of quaternities that pervade all being—an example of the mystical continuity between divine and material realms.

In the biblical book of Ezekiel, the prophet uses various terms to indicate his uncertainty about his vision's veridicality; here, the *Zohar* amplifies Ezekiel's emphasis on the mediated nature of mystical visions, through frequent references to the looking-glass nature of prophetic vision and by employing a distancing rhetoric that is already present in the biblical text. This underscores the document's broader attention to the nature of prophecy, a faculty to which some medieval kabbalists—such as Nehemiah the Prophet, Moses de León, and Joseph Gikatilla—appeared to lay implicit claim.

The last main chapter of this volume includes Zoharic commentary to various portions of the Torah. This section often displays remarkable wit through punning and wordplay in the interpretations of biblical verses, and it is filled with allusions and a subtle esotericism. Thematically, there is a prominent focus on the betrayal of Joseph by his brothers and on the Romans' martyrdom of ten rabbis. The latter event is viewed as a consequence of the former one—a view of history that presumably reflects an authorial concern with theodicy and the continued suffering of the Jewish people. One particularly rich passage explains the role of evil within the Divine economy, using the two sides of Moses' magical staff as the tableau on which these complexities are delineated.

Much of the material here can be found only in the printed editions, or sometimes in late manuscripts of Byzantine provenance. The short commentary on Ezekiel's chariot in *parashat Yitro* has been published only in a scholarly article by Ronit Meroz.

The volume closes with a short collection of passages that printers have labeled *Tosefta* despite their not fitting into that genre—a suitable end to the *Zohar* whose parameters and composition will remain ever mysterious.

Acknowledgments by Nathan Wolski

I wish to acknowledge the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, Monash University, for its support. I am grateful to Jonatan Benarroch for combing the manuscripts of the *Zohar*, preparing lists of variants, and to Rabbi Jonathan Matt, who has kindly and meticulously edited a user-friendly version of the text. Rabbi David E. S. Stein's contributions as copy editor have been invaluable. I thank my teacher Melila Hellner-Eshed and Avraham Leader for their assistance with particularly difficult passages. Mariana Raykov has overseen this project since its inception and deserves special thanks.

Most importantly, I extend my deepest gratitude to Rabbi Yehiel Poupko, our faithful shepherd, for his guidance, and to Daniel Matt, without whom this work would not have been possible. I thank both of them for the opportunity to have contributed to this monumental project. I express my appreciation to Margot Pritzker for her bold vision and foresight, and for her abiding commitment and support that made this project possible.

I dedicate this work to my *kinderlekh*, Layla, Ella, and Lev:

"May your steps run to hear words of the Ancient of Days" (BT *Berakhot* 17a).

Acknowledgments by Joel Hecker

The years that it took to write this translation and commentary were incredibly blessed, not only because of the magnificence and holiness of the task, but also because of the many scholars, teachers, friends, and students who helped me with the labor by reading sections of the translation, answering specific questions, and engaging in extended discussions of matters large and small. They include: Avruhm Addison, David Azriel, Steve Bachrach, Tom Baker, Jonatan Benarroch, David Brodsky, Marc Michael Epstein, Eugene Fleischman-Sotirescu, Gilad Gevaryahu, Dovid Halpern, Melila Hellner-Eshed, Tamar Kamionkowski, Rut Kara-Ivanov Kaniel, Mark Leuchter, Sarra Lev, Yehuda Liebes, Ronit Meroz, Kelilah Miller, Anat Reizel, Biti Roi, Dan Rosenberg, Chaim Saiman, Jeff Shapiro, Tzvi Sinensky, Elsie Stern, Sandra Valabregue-Perry, Mira Wasserman, Steven Weiner, Elliot Wolfson, Nathan Wolski, and Oded Yisraeli. Physicians Irvin Hirsch and Rachel Niknam helped me to grasp physiological details that were crucial for my understanding of various ailments described in *Raza de-Razin*.

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I am grateful to Jonatan Benarroch, who has carefully combed through dozens of variants as found in manuscripts and early printed editions, enabling me to establish a critical Aramaic text upon which this translation is based. Far beyond this task, Jonatan has highlighted the most interesting variants; he has also suggested parallels and related works stemming from his own immersion in Zoharic Kabbalah. He has been a frequent companion on the path, helping me think through the significance of our joint project.

Rabbi Jonathan Matt has enthusiastically prepared my critical Aramaic text for online publication at sup.org/zohar. I am most appreciative of his labors and his careful reading of the Aramaic text in comparison to the English.

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have now come to the house of study and said things unparalleled even in the days of Joshua son of Nun:… Open מ (*mem*) and closed ם (*mem*)—open utterance and sealed utterance," for they have taught me lessons both revealed and concealed.

The task of translating and interpreting the *Zohar* has been both grand and humbling; and I echo the sentiments of Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, who wrote, "I have explained the words [of the kabbalists] only according to what I have been taught from heaven. I know with true faith that their words are very, very deep, and my head does not reach even their ankles—but what can I do? For the commentator is obliged to explain as much as he can" (*Or Yaqar* 8:178). I give praise and thanks to the Almighty—the blessed Holy One, *YHVH*, Mystery who fills and encompasses all reality, who has provided me with glimpses of glory through the *Zohar, Book of Radiance*.

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1. *Zohar Ḥadash* was first printed in Salonika in 1597. It was so called because it contained material (with minor exceptions) omitted from the first printed editions of the *Zohar* (Mantua 1558–60 and Cremona 1559–60). On *Sitrei Otiyyot*, see Wald, *Doctrine of the Divine Name*.

2. In contrast to the majority of the *Zohar*, the *Heikhalot* in their entirety (excluding a few passages in the opening section of the first version) are spoken by Rabbi Shim'on alone. No other Zoharic personalities appear. In this apparent reluctance to depict dialogue, perhaps the author had in mind the Mishnah in *Ḥagigah* 2:1: "One does not expound… the Account of Creation before two people or [the Account of] the Chariot [= the halls and palaces] before one person, unless he is a sage and understands of his accord."

3. On this and on the halls more generally, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:591–94.

ZOHARIC COMPOSITIONS

היכלות בראשית

Heikhalot Be-Reshit

HALLS OF BE-RESHIT

Rabbi Shim'on said, "We have learned that when the blessed Holy One created the world, He engraved engravings of the mystery of faith within radiancies in supernal mysteries. He engraved above, He engraved below, all in one mystery. He fashioned the lower world on the pattern of the upper world—existing correspondingly to one another—that all would be one in a single union. Accordingly, the blessed Holy One engraved engravings of letters, above and below, and through them He created worlds.[1]

"Come and see: In the same way that the blessed Holy One formed the world, so too did He create Adam."[2]

He opened, saying, "*But they, like Adam, have violated the covenant*… (Hosea 6:7). The blessed Holy One adorned him with supernal crowns and created him with six aspects of the world, to be entirely perfect. All [creatures] were overcome by fear and trembling before him, for when Adam was created, he was created in the supernal image; and when they gazed upon that image, they were seized by fear and trembling.[3]

"Afterward, the blessed Holy One placed him in the Garden of Eden to revel there in transcendent delights. Supernal angels surrounded him and tended to him, divulging to him mysteries of their Lord. Come and see: When the blessed Holy One brought him to the Garden of Eden, from there would he gaze and contemplate all

supernal mysteries and all wisdom, so as to know and contemplate his Lord's glory.[4]

"There are seven halls—abodes—above, which are mystery of supernal faith, and there are seven halls below matching them, one corresponding to the other. These seven abodes of the halls below are the semblance of above. They are six corresponding to the supernal pattern; one is concealed and hidden above. All of these abide in supernal mystery, for all these halls contain the semblance of above and the semblance of below, to be comprised in the image of the mystery above and in the image of the mystery below. Within them was Adam's abode.[5]

"After he was banished from the Garden of Eden, the blessed Holy One arrayed them for the souls of the righteous, to delight in them as is fitting, from the supernal radiant glory. Every single one is arrayed on the pattern above and the pattern below, as we have established.[6]

"First hall. A site arrayed below to be as above. The Companions have already aroused the laws of the Garden of Eden, as it is in supernal mystery, arrayed deep within, within the concealment of the mystery below, hidden and sealed from all, upon which no eye prevails aside from the souls of the righteous—to be [38b] engraved above and below, to contemplate from there the mystery of their Lord and supernal bliss.

"These are the righteous, who did not exchange the glory of their Lord for another deity. It is written: *A woman of strength is her husband's crown* (Proverbs 12:4)—mystery of faith, that a person cleave to his Lord and fear Him constantly, not straying to the right or left. We have already established that a person must not pursue another deity, called '*Woman of Whoredom*'! Accordingly it is written *To protect you from a strange woman, from a foreign woman whose talk is smooth* (ibid. 7:5).[7]

"This hall abides in the image of supernal mystery. For when the souls of the righteous depart this world, they

enter within these halls in the Garden of Eden below; there, every single one enters for as long as the soul is required to dwell within. In every single hall there are images corresponding above and images corresponding below. There the soul is clothed in garments resembling this world, delighting there as long as she requires, until the time arrives to ascend to a loftier site, as is appropriate. From within that instrument in which she is clothed, she beholds sublime images—contemplating the glory of her Lord.[8]

"In this hall are supernal lights upon which to gaze. The souls of the converts who converted are there; they ascend there to gaze upon the supernal glory, and there they are clothed in a garment of light that shines and does not shine. The hall is surrounded by a precious stone and gold.[9]

"There lies an opening descending to the entrance of Hell. From there they gaze upon all the wicked of the other nations who did not enter the sacred sealed covenant, and who were banished by the angels of destruction, who torment them with flaming fire. They behold and rejoice that they converted.[10]

"Three times a day, they scintillate from the supernal radiance, delighting there. Above them is Onqelos the proselyte, as well as the other converts who converted. It is the same above, when their souls are worthy of ascending there to be adorned.[11]

"Second hall. This hall lies within the first hall. This opening is adjacent to the cave of the patriarchs, and this hall shines more than the first. Here, all manner of precious stones surround.[12]

"Within this hall is a single light comprising every color, shining from above to below. In this hall abide those who suffered afflictions and illnesses in this world in order to be refined, who acknowledged and praised their Lord every day, never withholding prayer from their mouth.

"Within this hall abide all those who sanctified the name of their Lord every day with all their strength, and

responded ‘Amen, may His great name be blessed’ with all their might. These abide deep within this hall, the light comprising all colors illuminating them. From that radiance they are sustained, and they behold other lights that fuse and do not fuse in their midst. Above them is the Messiah, who enters and stands among them, comforting them.[13]

“He ventures forth from that hall and enters the third hall. There are all the gravely ill and pained, and all the tender schoolchildren who did not complete their days, as well as all those who were saddened by the destruction of the Sanctuary and shed tears—all of them abide in that hall, and he comforts them.[14]

“He ventures forth from this hall and enters the fourth hall. There are all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and all those slain by the other nations. He begins to weep [39a], whereupon all the princes of the seed of David embrace him and comfort him. He begins weeping a second time, until a voice resounds; and he clings to that voice and ascends above, where he lingers until the new moon. When he descends, countless lights and lusters descend with him —illuminating all the halls, as well as healing and light to all the ill and pained who suffered with the Messiah.[15]

“Then he dons a royal robe—all those slain by the other nations are engraved and inscribed in that royal robe. That royal robe ascends above and is engraved there within the supernal purple robe of the King. In the future the blessed Holy One will don that purple robe to judge the nations, as is written: *He will execute judgment upon the nations—filled with bodies* (Psalms 110:6). Eventually he [the Messiah] re-appears and comforts them—lights and delights descending with him in which to revel, countless angels and chariots with him, each one bearing a garment with which to clothe all the souls of the slain. There they delight all the while he ascends and descends.[16]

“Within this hall, abiding deep within a lofty level, are the ten ordained nobles—Rabbi Akiva and his companions.

All of them rise ascendantly within the speculum above, illumining with the supernal radiant glory. Of them is written *No eye has seen, O God, but You, what You will do for one who awaits You* (Isaiah 64:3).[17]

"In the fifth hall abide all the perfectly penitent, who returned from their sins and regretted them, whose souls departed in purity, as well as all the seven masters of penitence, and all those who sanctified the name of their Lord, accepting death upon themselves. At the portal of this opening stands Manasseh, king of Judah, for the blessed Holy One accepted him in perfect penitence and dug an opening to receive him. Within this hall abide all the potently penitent whose soul departed at the moment they were aggrieved about their deeds. These revel in the supernal delight every single day. Three times a day, radiance infuses the hall in which everyone delights, as is fitting; each is scorched by the light of his fellow's canopy, whether above or below. This hall is situated above those below—even the completely righteous cannot enter this hall to stand within; it is the highest rung of all, notwithstanding the rung of the pious, which is the highest rung of all.[18]

"Sixth hall. This hall is the hall of the pious. This hall is the most eminent of all, and this is the hall situated above all; the hall of the right—none can stand within, aside from the holy pious ones and all those who love their Lord with abounding love. At the opening of this hall stand all those who enact the unification of their Lord every day. These enter this hall, poised to ascend first.[19]

"Above this opening is Abraham, the right hand of the blessed Holy One. At another opening stands Isaac—who was bound upon the altar, a perfect offering before the blessed Holy One. At another opening, within, stands Jacob the Consummate, and the twelve tribes surrounding him, *Shekhinah* upon their heads. When Israel are in distress, the three patriarchs arouse, rousing *Shekhinah* to protect them.

Then She ascends and is crowned above and protects Israel.[20]

"Just as there are halls below in the Garden of Eden, so too above halls are arrayed which are mystery of faith. All these halls are linked together and crowned with a single hall: the seventh hall, which is hidden and concealed from all the other halls. In the middle of this hall stands a single pillar [39b] of many colors—green, white, red, and black. When souls ascend, they enter within this hall. Whoever befits this color ascends within; and whoever befits that color ascends within—every single one, as is fitting. These six halls serve as abodes, as we have said; the seventh is not an abode. All six are in the mystery of six. Of this is written בראשית (*Bereshit*), *In the beginning* (Genesis 1:1)—six rungs above, six rungs below; it is all one mystery."[21]

Come and see: בראשית (*Be-reshit*), *In the beginning* (Genesis 1:1).

Rabbi Yehudah said, "There were two houses—the First Temple and the Second Temple, this above and this below. They are the two ה's (*hes*)—this above and this below; and all is one. The superior ב (*bet*) opens gates to every side, thereby concatenating one in the other. ראשית (*Reshit*), *Beginning*—then it is ראשית (*reshit*), first, to be reckoned in the count of the edifice."[22]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said in the name of Rabbi El'azar, "בראשית (*Be-reshit*), *In the beginning*—totality, the image in which all images are comprised, mystery of the verse: *the appearance of the semblance of the glory of YHVH* (Ezekiel 1:28)—the mirror in which six others appear, and this is בראשית (*Be-reshit*)—ברא שית (*bara shit*), created six. Come and see: When six colors enter within this mirror, She primes Herself to display them and fashion through them the artistry of the world. Now, should you say that the artistry of the world hails from this rung, it is written: ברא שית (*bara*

shit), *created six*—praise belongs to the six who compose artistry through this!”[23]

Rabbi Yose opened, “*The blossoms have appeared on earth, the time of singing has arrived; the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land* (Song of Songs 2:12). *The blossoms have appeared on earth*—mystery of six; *have appeared on earth*—for they are images manifesting in this rung; *the time of* הזמיר (*ha-zamir*), *singing, has arrived*—then it praises and exalts, as is said: *so that glory may sing to You and not be silent* (Psalms 30:13). So it is called מזמור (*mizmor*), song, as we have learned concerning what is written: לדוד מזמור (*Mizmor le-David*), *A song of David*—for *Shekhinah* settled upon him first. This is the significance of *the time of singing has arrived*.”[24]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “For then the time to praise arrives.”[25]

Rabbi Abba said, “The upper world is concealed, and all its contents are concealed—for it abides in supernal mystery, the day of all days. When it created and emanated, it engendered these six; and because it is concealed and all its contents concealed, Scripture said: בראשית (*Bereshit*) (Genesis 1:1)—ברא שית (*bara shit*), created six, supernal days, without specifying who created them—because it is the upper world, concealed. Afterward, Scripture revealed and elaborated the lower construction, specifying who created it—because it is the world that abides openly—saying: *Elohim created the heavens and the earth* (ibid.). It is not written in a concealed manner *created the heavens*, because it is a revealed world, and so Scripture said: *Elohim created*—*Elohim* precisely, the name revealed! The first in concealment, for it is the upper world; the lower, openly—that the work of the blessed Holy One always be concealed and revealed. The mystery of the holy name too is concealed and revealed. את השמים (*Et ha-shamayim*), *The heavens*—amplifying the meaning to include the lower heavens below. ואת הארץ (*Ve-et ha-arets*), *And the earth*—to encompass the earth below, and

to include all her works corresponding to the pattern above.[26]

"*The earth was chaos and void* (Genesis 1:2)—as we have said. This is supernal earth, for She has no light of Her own. *Was*—at first She already was, as is fitting; now—*chaos and void and darkness* (ibid.). היתה (*Hayetah*), *Was*, precisely! Afterward She diminished Herself and diminished the light. *Chaos and void, and darkness* [...] *and wind* (ibid.)—the four elements of the world consummated within Her.[27]

"Alternatively, ואת הארץ (*Ve-et ha-arets*), *And the earth*—as we have said, amplifying the meaning to include the earth below, arranged in numerous abodes, corresponding entirely to the pattern above. This is the significance of *The earth was chaos and void and darkness* [...] *and wind*. These are the abodes of the earth: *Erets, Adamah, Gai, Neshiyyah, Tsiyyah, Arqa, Tevel*, and the greatest of all is *Tevel*, as is written: *He* [40a] *judges tevel, the world, with righteousness* (Psalms 9:9)."[28]

Rabbi Yose said, "What is *Tsiyyah*?"

He replied, "This is the site of Hell, as is said: ציה וצלמות (*tsiyyah ve-tsalmavet*), *drought and deep darkness* (Jeremiah 2:6). This is the mystery of what is written: *and darkness over the face of the abyss* (Genesis 1:2)—mystery of the site of Hell; *Tsiyyah*—site of the angel of death, as we have said, because he darkens the faces of creatures. This is the site of ultimate darkness. *Chaos*—this is נשיה, *Neshiyyah*, because no image at all can be seen within, so that אתנשי (*itneshei*), it is forgotten, entirely; so it is called *Neshiyyah*, Oblivion. *Void*—this is *Arqa*, a site not forgotten."[29]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "This is *Gai. And a wind of Elohim hovering* (Genesis 1:2)—corresponding to *Tevel*, nourished by the wind of *Elohim*; all are as one."[30]

Likewise for the supernal earth; there are seven abodes above—rung upon rung—and in all the abodes are supernal angels—one upon another; so too below. All are linked to one another so that all becomes one. There are seven

abodes above—the supernal earth embraces them, all of them rooted within Her, in each of them the praise of the blessed Holy One; rungs distinguished from one another, sites distinct from one another.[31]

First abode below. A site of dark domicile that does not shine, arrayed as the abode for spirits, quaestors, and potent whirlwinds—invisible, possessing neither light nor darkness; no image whatsoever. There, knowledge does not pertain at all, no impression of form at all. A prince presides over that site named טהריאל (*Tohari'el*), and with him seventy flying deputies. They are obliterated by the flaming sparks above them—not enduring, not seen, not found. When morning appears, all of them are renewed but they do not endure. When they reach that place, they are annihilated and are not found; and they enter one hollow of the abyss and are not seen. When night dusks, they are obliterated by the sparks—until morning appears.[32]

Second abode. A site shining more brightly, dark though not as dark as the first, arrayed as the abode for angels appointed over the deeds of human beings, and to seduce them along the evil way they pursue. This site is more visible than the first. These angels are proximate to human beings and relish in the fragrance and aroma below, ascending beneficently to shine more brightly. A prince is above them named קדומיאל (*Qadumi'el*). These open song, fall quiet, and disappear, not seen, until Israel below open and intone song—then they abide in their place, manifesting more brightly. Three times a day they recite the *Qedushah*. When Israel engage Torah, all of them soar and testify above; and the blessed Holy One takes pity on them.[33]

Third abode. A site of flames and pillars of smoke; there, the stream of the flowing, gushing river of fire—the burning place of the souls of the wicked. From there fire descends upon the heads of the wicked; there, the angels of destruction who torment them. There, at times, slanderers prevail upon Israel—to accuse them, excepting when they

seize a remedy to thrust them aside. A prince is above them from the left side, all of them from the side of darkness, as is said: *and darkness over the face of the abyss* (Genesis 1:2); wicked Samael lurks there.[34]

Fourth abode. A luminous site—there, radiance for the supernal angels on the right side. They open song and conclude—not vanishing like the former [40b], who open song and are burned, passing through the flaming fire, returning renewed as before. These abide in their place and do not pass away; these are angels of compassion, who never change. Of them is written *He makes his angels spirits*... (Psalms 104:4). These perform their missions in the world—unseen by human beings, except in a vision, or in a different mode, through great awareness. An angel is appointed over them named פדאל (*Pad'el*). Within, keys of compassion open to those who return to their Lord, and they open gates to usher in their prayers and supplications.[35]

Fifth abode. An abode shining more luminously than all the preceding. Within are angels—some fire, some water, sometimes manifesting in compassion, sometimes manifesting in judgment, these on this side, these on that side. Sometimes these shine and these darken. These are appointed to sing to their Lord—these at midnight, these when light ascends. A prince is above them named קדשיאל (*Qadashi'el*). When night splits and the north wind arouses and the blessed Holy One comes to delight with the righteous in the Garden of Eden, then the north wind knocks, reaching those appointed to sing at midnight, and all of them sing and open song. When morning appears and the blackness of morning unites with the light, all the others recite song—and all the stars of heaven, and all the other angels below, assist them—as is written: *When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of Elohim shouted for joy* (Job 38:7), until Israel take up song and praise after them.[36]

Sixth abode. A supernal abode—close to the Kingdom of Heaven. Within are ships, rivers, and streams branching from the sea, and countless fish swarming to the four directions of the world. Above them are appointed officers, and one prince above them—named Uriel—in charge of all those below. All of them sail forth at the times and moments when ships set sail to this side and that. When the ships set sail to the south—the prince presiding over that side is Michael, who hails from the right. When the ships set sail to the north—the prince presiding over them, to that side, is Gabriel, who hails from the left side. When the ships set sail to the east—there is the prince presiding over that side, named Uriel; he is to the right. When the ships set sail to the west—the prince presiding over that side is Raphael.[37]

Seventh abode. The most supreme abode of all. The souls of only the righteous are found there, delighting in the supernal splendor, reveling in sublime delights and pleasures. There are found only the worthy—and the treasuries of peace, blessing, and generosity—corresponding entirely to the pattern above. The Companions have already explained this.[38]

So it is with the seven abodes in the earth below—all of them corresponding above. In all of them are species resembling human beings; and all of them acknowledge and praise the blessed Holy One. None know His glory as those in the highest abode—they behold His glory fittingly, worshipping and praising Him, perceiving His glory. This uppermost world—*Tevel*—exists enduringly solely for the sake of the righteous, who are holy bodies [41a]. Correspondingly above, the seventh abode exists solely for the souls of the righteous. Likewise, this seventh abode below exists solely for the bodies of the righteous, so that all becomes one, one corresponding to the other.[39]

Come and see: Rabbi Shim’on said, “The seven abodes we have mentioned—within are seven halls of the mysteries

of faith corresponding to the seven supernal heavens; and in every single hall are supernal angels.[40]

"First hall. Here is a spirit appointed over the souls of converts who converted—named רחמיאל (*Raḥami'el*). He receives them; and they bask in the radiant glory above.[41]

"Second hall. Here is a spirit named אהינאל (*Ahina'el*), presiding over all the souls of the children who did not merit to study Torah in this world. He presides over them and teaches them.[42]

"Third hall. In this there is a spirit named אדרהינאל (*Adrahina'el*), presiding over the souls of those who returned in repentance yet did not return—namely they contemplated, yet before they returned, they died. These are tormented in Hell. Afterward they are brought before this appointed spirit and he receives them, and they desire to bask in the radiant glory of their Lord but they do not bask. These are called בני בשר (*benei basar*), children of flesh, and of them is written *From new moon to new moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to bow down before Me—says YHVH* (Isaiah 66:23).[43]

"Fourth hall. Here presides a spirit named גדריהאל (*Gedaryah'el*), presiding over all the souls of those slain by the other nations, to draw them in to the purple robe of the King, where they are engraved until the day the blessed Holy One will avenge them, as is written: *He will execute judgment upon the nations—filled with bodies—smashing heads over the wide earth* (Psalms 110:6).[44]

"Fifth hall. Here presides a spirit named אדיריאל (*Adiri'el*), presiding over all the bitten-souls, who barely tasted the sins of the world and who feared their Lord constantly—they are nourished here by radiant glory of the King.[45]

"Sixth hall. Here presides a spirit named צדקיאל (*Tsadqi'el*), appointed over all the souls of the perfectly penitent. These are stationed to bask in the radiant glory of the supernal King, and do not withdraw from Him.[46]

“Seventh hall. Here presides the supernal spirit of the right side named Michael, presiding over all the souls of the pious, who attained that side. These in this most supreme abode are above all. Michael is chief prince over all residing within, countless thousands and myriads all standing beneath him in that side. There, the souls of the pious delight in the supernal light flowing from the World that is Coming.”[47]

Come and see: Rabbi Shim’on said, “Who knows how to arrange the prayer of his Lord like Moses?! When it was necessary for him to arrange his prayer at length, he so arranged; likewise when he needed to shorten.”[48]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “We have found in the books of the ancients the arrangement of the mystery of mysteries in a single nexus. There are times when it is necessary to arrange one’s prayer perfectly—to bind the bond to sweeten one’s Lord as is fitting, to know how to actualize total union, to split firmaments and to open openings so that there be no one to hinder him. Happy are the righteous—for they know how to seduce their Lord, to abolish decrees, to ensconce *Shekhinah* in the world, to bring down blessings, and to eliminate masters of judgment so that they may not prevail in the world!”[49]

Rabbi Shim’on rose and said, “*Who can express the mighty acts of YHVH* [*or declare all His praise*?] (Psalms 106:2). Who will uncover the dust from your eyes, O Abraham the pious—the right hand of the blessed Holy One?! To you was revealed the mystery of mysteries, and you inaugurated prayers in the world; to you were revealed the halls of the supernal King.[50]

“There are seven holy halls arranged with portals enduringly, and the prayer [41b] of unification enters every single one. Whoever knows how to sweeten his Lord and to actualize unification perfectly, knows how to enter all of them, to bind bonds one with another—spirit with spirit,

lower spirit with higher spirit. [Of these] is written O *YHVH! In distress they sought You, pouring out a whisper when You chastised them* (Isaiah 26:16).[51]

"First hall. It is written: *And beneath His feet was like a fashioning of* לבנת הספיר (*livnat ha-sappir*), *sapphire pavement, and like the essence of heaven for purity* (Exodus 24:10). Mystery of mysteries: The spirit called ספירא (*Sappira*), Sapphire—like ספירו (*sefiru*), the sapphirine radiance, of a precious stone—sparkles on two sides. The first light ascends and descends—white light sparkling in every direction, above and below, and to the four directions of the world. The second light is concealed and revealed. From this light, four lights scatter to four sides—all the lights one light—like the scintilla of a blazing lamp sparkling lights before a person's eyes, the lights of the lamp ascending and descending, shooting to and fro from within the flaming light of the blazing lamp, all one light; so too these. All these lights sparkle with a reddish hue like the appearance of polished bronze, as is said: *sparkling like the gleam of burnished bronze* (Ezekiel 1:7). This is on the right.[52]

"On the left, there is a spirit called לבנת (*Livnat*), Pavement; it merges with the first spirit, fusing together. Its light is red and white as one, because it derives from the previous lights. As this one's lights proceed, they converge with the previous lights and are comprised within—becoming one. Only the previous lights are visible; the latter are not revealed—not known that they entered within them, concealing themselves within, as is said: *and it was not known that they had entered into them…* (Genesis 41:21). This is spirit within spirit—becoming one; lights within lights—becoming one. Here are the two lower firmaments of the firmaments called 'heavens of the heavens.'[53]

"From these two sparkling spirits, the holy *ophanim*, wheels, were created—their nature equivalent to the living

beings, as is written: *The appearance of the wheels and their design*… (Ezekiel 1:16); and this is the significance of the verse: *The image of the living beings, their appearance, was like burning coals of fire, something with the appearance of torches; it moved about among the living beings* (ibid., 13). What does *it* signify? The holy spirit, the site from which they sprang—illumining them, as is written: *and there was brightness to the fire, and out of the fire flashed forth lightning* (ibid.).[54]

"When spirit fuses with spirit, there flashes forth from them the radiance of one living being poised above four *ophanim*, wheels. It has the image of a lion, and rules over 1300 myriads of other wheels; it has the wings of an eagle. This one is empowered over all those wheels. Each one of those four moves in four *galgalim*, spheres; in every single sphere, three supports—twelve supports in four spheres. This spirit rules over all; from here they emerge. This spirit sustains all; from it they are nourished.[55]

"Each of these four *ophanim*, wheels, has four faces; and all these faces gaze toward the four sides of the living being standing above them. When these four beneath the living being move, they interlock, linking with one another, as is said: *the loops opposite one another* (Exodus 36:12)—combining together, one with another. When the spheres move, a sweet voice is heard among all the hosts below, according to their kind.[56]

"Beneath this hall, hosts spread out to countless directions of the firmaments below, until they reach the planet Saturn. All of them gaze toward this hall; from there they are nourished. All those in this hall gaze toward that spirit, as is written: *wherever the spirit would go, they went, not turning as they went* (Ezekiel 1:12). This is the hall called Hall of לבנת הספיר (*Livnat ha-Sappir*), Sapphire Pavement.[57]

"The light of this spirit, which comprises a second spirit, ascends and descends, never resting, like sunlight in water.

None can fathom it, save the aspiration of the righteous person in the prayer which enters that hall, ascending to bind bonds perfectly at the origin [42a] of this spirit, as is fitting. Then the light wraps itself within, delighting—ascending with it, to be linked in the nexus of the second hall, so that the comprising spirit might be encompassed within another higher spirit above.[58]

"This comprising spirit contains the living being and all the *ophanim*, wheels, and *galgalim*, spheres; they are linked within. Just as fire links with water and water with fire, south with north and north with south, east with west and west with east, so all of them link with one another and interconnect. That spirit ascends to be bound; and the living being gazes above toward the second hall—they gaze upon one another.[59]

"In the middle of this hall a pillar is thrust, ascending to the middle of another hall. It is hollow and is set from below above, so that spirit might fuse with spirit—and so on to the highest of all, so that they might all be one spirit, as is said: *there is one spirit for all* (Ecclesiastes 3:19).[60]

"Second hall. It is written: *and like the essence of heaven for purity* (Exodus 24:10). Here is the unchanging spirit called זהר (*Zohar*), Radiance—always abiding in whiteness, its colors not mingling with another—essence that never changes. This one is not sufficiently revealed to sparkle like the other. This one manifests with difficulty; like the concealment of the eye—which as it rolls radiates and sparkles in its revolution—so too with this one. For when that first spirit ascends, it rolls revolutions and reveals it—and is bound to it like the nexus of the white of the eye with another color, yet more rarefied, found above it.[61]

"This spirit revolves through the spirit below. The light below spins around revolving this light; and it is illuminated. It is not able to shine until the lower grasps it, linking with it. Then it shines, embracing the comprising-

light below, though it does not change at all, merely being revealed through its revolution. When this light revolves, another light is propelled on the left side, revolving and spinning around with it. This is the mystery of what is written: *The curves of your thighs like ornaments, the work of a craftsman's hands* (Song of Songs 7:2). Happy is one who knows how to revolve lights![62]

"The other spirit merges with it and spins about, radiating around blue and white. This white joins with that white, and the blue joins with the red of the lower light of the left side. They coalesce, becoming one, and are called עצם השמים (*Etsem ha-Shamayim*), the Essence of Heaven. All that is below, as well as the lower hall, are all comprised here; and because everything is included here it is called the Essence of Heaven.[63]

"From the fusion of these lights the six-winged *seraphim* were created, as is said: *seraphim were standing above Him; each one had six wings* (Isaiah 6:2)—all of them with six because they all hail from the Essence of Heaven. It is they who burn those who show no concern for the glory of their Lord. The mystery: He who makes worldly use of the crown shall perish. Whoever studies Scripture and the six orders of the Mishnah—this is the one who knows how to order and bind the unification of his Lord, as is fitting. It is they who sanctify the name of their Lord continually every day.[64]

"As the lights revolve, there flashes forth from them the radiance of one living being, poised and presiding above four beings ruling over the aforementioned [*seraphim*], for they contain them within. When these move, lower *seraphim*—the snakes that emerged from that fiery serpent that inflicted death upon the whole world—are subdued. These beings have the faces of eagles. They gaze toward that living being, the supernal eagle above them, as is said: *the way of an eagle in heaven* (Proverbs 30:19).[65]

"This spirit rules over all. The living being poised over all gazes above, and all of them toward it. When all of them

move, countless hosts tremble; some of them shine, while others are smashed asunder by their presence, and they burn them in fire, returning renewed as before. All of them enter beneath the living being, concealing themselves beneath its wings, to be comprised above.[66]

"These four beings [42b] ascend when the spirit illuminates the living being. Every single one has four *galgalim*, spheres: one sphere faces the east—three supports bearing it, facing the center; one sphere faces the west—three supports bearing it, facing the center; one sphere faces the south—three supports bearing it, facing the center; one sphere faces the north—three supports bearing it, facing the center. All twelve supports are propelled from the center, and the center opens and closes. As each sphere moves, a voice is heard throughout all the firmaments. These four beings all link together; and the wheels below enter within these beings, incorporating with one another.[67]

"This spirit, which merges with those spirits, flames—ascending to be united above, poised to be fused and linked by the aspiration of the righteous person in the prayer he utters. For as it ascends and enters that hall, it raises all—and they are all raised with it, combining together, until they are comprised within that spirit. That spirit is propelled by the desire of the nexus of unity of prayer, unifying all, until they all reach the third hall, fused together, like the former—fire with water and water with fire, air with dust and dust with air, east with west and west with east, north with south and south with north. So all are linked together, united with each other, and intertwined with one another; and similarly with countless hosts and camps descending below, mingling with the lower realms extending to the planet Jupiter, where numerous deputies are appointed over the world.[68]

"When this spirit comprises all and all are comprised within, it ascends and is embraced—and enters within the

third hall, so that it merges with the spirit there, within the pillar standing in the center. Then all is perfected up to this point, as is fitting—all is one spirit, composed of all and perfect in all, as is said: *there is one spirit for all* (Ecclesiastes 3:19). Here pertains kneeling to cleave to one's Lord.[69]

"Third hall. This hall is the hall of the spirit called נגה (*Nogah*), Brilliance. This spirit is purest of all, no color seen within—neither white, nor green, nor black, nor red. Accordingly, it is called טוהר (*Tohar*), Purity—purest and clearest of all those below. Even though it is purest of all, it does not manifest until those below revolve and appear within it, entering within. Once they enter within, it manifests its light, though not with the color of any one of them.[70]

"When this spirit is consummated by all those below, it emits a light consisting of three lights. Two lights ascend and descend, sparkling. Within that sparkling, twenty-two lights are visible—different from one another, all of them one light. They enter within the one light; that light absorbs them. It shines only when the lights below ascend; and the aspiration of prayer propels them all. Then that light radiates forth from within the spirit—illumining, generating these two sparkling lights, manifesting twenty-two, like the number of letters of Torah. Afterward they return and are assimilated within that light.[71]

"All the lower lights are comprised in these lights, and all of them in this light. This light is comprised within the spirit, and the spirit abides in this third hall, though only abiding to settle within the fourth hall, into which it yearns to ascend.[72]

"When the lights emanating from the spirit sparkle, all the gleaming lights join together. The instant they emerge from the one light—thrusting to shine—a great and holy living being flashes forth from them, its image like the appearance of all the [43a] other living beings: the image of

a lion and the image of an eagle combined as one, from which is fashioned a single form.[73]

"Beneath this living being are four supernal *ophanim*, wheels, like the appearance of topaz, embroidered with the totality of all colors—six hundred thousand myriads all within them—and each of the four wheels has eight wings. They all flash forth from within the radiance of the living being presiding over them. When the light sparkles, it generates these hosts.[74]

"These four beneath it are stationed at the four directions of the world. Each one has four faces: two faces gaze toward the living being, and two faces they cover with their wings—from the sparkling lights upon which they are unable to gaze. Whenever they move in the four spheres and twelve supports like the previous ones, innumerable hosts and camps are fashioned from their perspiration—all of whom praise and chant, never abating. These have no measure.[75]

"This hall has four openings to the four directions of the world; at every single opening ten deputies. When all those in the halls below as well as the halls themselves ascend through the aspiration of pure prayer, all the deputies open the openings, until they all combine with one another and integrate with each other. All of them enter—deputies within deputies, camps within camps, wheels in living beings, living beings in wheels (in these wheels), lights in lights, spirit in spirit, until they enter this spirit.[76]

"In this hall there is a certain place like the appearance of sparkling gold. There are stored numerous hosts and camps which neither ascend nor crown themselves above. Instead, in the hour when all these bind bonds and the hall rises to be crowned, they all venture forth seething with judgment; they are called shield-bearing warriors, sent into the world by the masters of judgment in the fourth hall. In this place six hundred thousand myriads of gold shields are suspended on four sides in every direction; likewise

beneath them, sixty surrounding the walls. All these shields wage battles outside—with swords and spears—with all the emissaries of judgment in the world, until they reach, rung by rung, the planet Mars. Then the hall ascends and is crowned with the spirit and all those hosts, but this place remains in its site. This place is called תא הרצים (*ta ha-ratsim*), *the chamber of the runners* (1 Kings 14:28, 2 Chronicles 12:11)—these emissaries run to accomplish judgment and retribution in all the corners of the world.[77]

"As prayer ascends it raises all these lights and camps, clustering clusters, and they are all comprised as one—until spirit is joined to spirit, becoming one, and they enter within the pillar to be incorporated within the spirit of the fourth hall. Happy is the share of one who knows the mystery of his Lord, raising His banner in the appropriate place![78]

"Come and see: Everything is interdependent, this requiring that, to be perfected by each other and illuminated by one another, until everything ascends to the site requiring perfection; at first from below, subsequently from above. Then—perfection on all sides and all is consummate as is fitting.[79]

"Whoever knows these mysteries and actualizes perfection cleaves to his Lord and abolishes all harsh decrees; he adorns his Master and draws down blessings upon the world. This is the person who is called 'pillar of the world.' His prayer does not return unfulfilled; his share is in the world that is coming; he is reckoned among the scions of faith.[80]

"Come and see: All these halls, all these living beings, all these hosts, all these lights and all these spirits all need one another in order to be perfected from below, and subsequently to be perfected from above. These halls cleave to one another.

"All of them cleave to one another like the colors of the eye. All that is within them—like the vision visible in

concealment when the eye rolls and the sparkling radiance appears. As for that which is not seen in the rolling—it is the spirit ruling over all. Hence, they depend on one another, rungs upon rungs, levels upon levels, until everything is crowned [43b] as is fitting.[81]

"Come and see: Were it not for all the colors of the eye that can be seen, the radiant colors would not be visible when the eye is closed and rolls around. And were it not for those colors, the concealed one ruling over them could not be apprehended. Thus, all is interdependent, interlinked.[82]

"When all is comprised as one in the third hall, and the aspiration of prayer ascends to be adorned in the fourth hall, then all is one; one desire, one bond. Here pertains prostration to gain the favor of one's Lord.[83]

"Fourth hall. This hall is different from all the others. This one has four halls, one within the other, all of them one hall. Here is the spirit called זכות (*Zekhut*), Merit. In this place the merit of all the world's inhabitants is pondered. This spirit absorbs all. From it emanate seventy lights, all sparkling, all in a circle, not ramifying like the others, but adjoining one another, illuminating each other and embracing one another. All the merits of the world stand before these lights. From all of them proceed two lights of equal stature stationed before them always. Corresponding to these are seventy appointed princes outside, surrounding all these halls. These seventy lights, as well as the two lights stationed before them, are all internal, deep within. This is the mystery of what is written: *Your belly is a heap of wheat edged with roses* (Song of Songs 7:3).[84]

"All the merits and all the deeds of the world enter before these lights to be judged. The two lights bear witness, for there are seven eyes of *YHVH* ranging over the whole earth. Everything that transpires in the world is inscribed—the deed precisely, the merit exactly, ingrained enduringly. These two lights examine and scrutinize them,

and testify before the seventy lights. These seventy issue decrees and promulgate judgments, for good or ill. Here then is the site of Merit.[85]

"Within this spirit are inscribed three letters—י ה ו (*yod, he, vav*). For when these three cleave together in this site, like the cleaving of male in female, they are then inscribed within, never withdrawing from there. Afterward, a light flashes forth, radiating to four sides. This light emits three others—three law courts, issuing other judgments on worldly affairs: riches, poverty, diseases, and wholeness, and all the other matters by which the world is judged. One hall is for the first seventy, deep within; three for three others.[86]

"This spirit ascends, comprising all those below, and brings forth a holy living being—flaming, eyes like human eyes—to oversee the thousand thousands and myriad of myriads of hosts of masters of judgment. All of them receive decrees, and open and close [the doors of the hall] to the world, completing the judgment.[87]

"Beneath this living being are four *seraphim*, all blazing brilliantly, fiery sparks ascending—each one has seventy-two *galgalim*, spheres, flaming with fire. When they move, a river of fire is formed—a thousand thousands ministering the fire, countless hosts firing forth. As the spheres move, innumerable are the myriad of myriads arising from them within the fire. Beneath the second hall, singing legions emerge; they seek to draw near here, yet all of them are burned.[88]

"All the princes of the world who are empowered to rule derive their authority from here, from within the spirit inscribed with three letters. And it is from here that their existence is removed from the world; and they are judged in this flowing, gushing fire. Everything is transmitted to this hall because three letters are inscribed here, and the spirit is composed of them. This living being brings forth hosts and camps without number.[89]

“All the judgments of the world, for good or ill, issue from this hall—except for three: children, life, and sustenance, because authority was not granted to this site, for this matter depends on the supernal river from which all lights stream. In the middle [44a] of this hall, a place is arrayed to receive the spirit above within this spirit; it ascends thereby.[90]

“This hall has twelve openings; in every single opening are all the officers and deputies who proclaim, to make known below all the judgments destined to descend below, as is said: *He called out loudly, saying ‘Hew down the tree…’* (Daniel 4:11). From these heralds all the Masters of Wings receive the word, in turn conveying the matter to the firmament of the sun. From there, as the sun comes out, the word soars forth and flies through the world, reaching the serpent of heaven, which is in the middle of the heavens, where the stars of heaven are congealed. The officers beneath the sun and those appointed over the serpent hear the word and seize it. From there, it disseminates to the world—and even demonic spirits and even birds of heaven proclaim it throughout the world. Heralds return and close the openings, so that spirit might ascend within spirit, until all the lower spirits are entirely one, together with this spirit—all comprised and integrated within one another, until all becomes one.[91]

“When a person is on his sickbed he is judged here—for life or death. Life depends on the realm beyond. If he is judged here for life, life is granted him from beyond; if not, it is not granted. Happy is the share of one who cleaves to his Lord, entering and emerging! Here pertains bowing with one’s face to the ground to overpower judgment. Of this hall is said *A faithful God, without corruption…* (Deuteronomy 32:4).[92]

“Fifth hall. This hall is the hall of flashing lightning, a glowing spirit illumining those below. This spirit—which

encompasses, opens, and closes—sparkles on every side. From this scintillation a single purplish light shines. This light comprises all the radiant colors: white, black, red, and green light. These are blended with one another: white is embroidered with red, black with green, and subsequently white with black, yielding an embroidered living being imbued with green and red—its image like the image of a human being, which comprises all images.[93]

"From it extend four supports, great beings above those below, called 'one wheel'—in reality two—for when one appears, another is illuminated within it, attached to one another, intertwined. Subsequently, another intertwines, one within the other; and four heads appear to the four directions of the world, but they are all one body. These are they of which is written *as of one wheel being inside the other wheel* (Ezekiel 1:16). They are all bound together, like the appearance of the higher living beings, which never separate. As for the living being of four embroidered colors, [its hues] blend together to four sides. Hence, when this living being moves, it moves in two directions.[94]

"This spirit of lightning is composed of two spirits: the spirit of lightning that generates one living being as well as all the lights; and another spirit that is illuminated from it, called 'the flaming spirit.' From it shine forth two lights that are four; these lights change colors. Here is *the flame of the ever-turning sword* (Genesis 3:24); these are the changing lights, the flame of the sword. These are poised above the hall below, for the flame of the sword looms over the seventy lights of the law court. From here: all judges rendering judgment—a sword hangs over their heads above.[95]

"This flame of the sword—the lights on the left side—generate another living being, poised above four that do not abide enduringly: two on the right and two on the left. When the spirit of this living being infuses these, two flaming sparks radiate forth, venturing out of this hall,

changing continuously. These flaming sparks are sometimes female, sometimes male, sometimes spirits, sometimes holy watchers. Why so? Because when this living being fuses with the first living being, from the potency of their fusion a spark flashes forth—flaming perpetually, never extinguishing, soaring after the two sparks. In the first instance they are males carrying out missions in the world; but before they complete [their task] they are extinguished. Whereupon the spark strikes them [44b], illuminating them, and they are renewed as before, becoming females, ranging and roaming; but before they complete [their task] they [too] are extinguished. This spark strikes them, illuminating them, and they are restored as before, for that spark is composed of all, composed of the four colors; consequently they modulate through all these aspects.[96]

"This spirit is fused with another spirit, as we have said; and two can be seen as one—unlike the others preceding, for when they fuse together only one is visible. Here, [two] can be seen, abiding in love, comprising all those below. And even though they are two, they are one—when spirit spreads within spirit, manifesting in love. This is the mystery of the verse *Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, browsing among the roses* (Song of Songs 4:5). When the two spirits spread lovingly into one another, this hall then transforms and is called 'The Hall of Love.' This hall abides enduringly, concealed within the mystery of mysteries, for the one who is worthy to cleave to it; here is written: *There I will give you my love* (ibid. 7:13).[97]

"Afterward, when the two spirits that are one shine forth, innumerable hosts shoot out on many sides, thousands and myriads, beyond measure—some called mandrakes, some vines, and some pomegranates—until countless hosts extend without, as far the planet called Venus, all of them in love, never separating. Here is written: *If a man offered all the wealth of his house for love, he*

would be utterly scorned (Song of Songs 8:7). Here pertains prostration and spreading of hands to cleave to the love of one's Lord.[98]

"Sixth hall. Here is the spirit called Crimson Thread, mystery of what is written: *Your lips are like a crimson thread* (Song of Songs 4:3). This hall is the hall called 'Hall of Desire'; here is the spirit of desire that all the lower spirits pursue, to cleave to it with a kiss, with love. This spirit comprises six and abides in six: comprising six below, abiding in six on high. Accordingly this spirit emits twelve lights, all composed of above and below. These twelve lights delight to ascend above and to receive all those below.[99]

"This hall—*Ratson*—is the desire of all. Whoever ties clusters and raises them here attains good-will from *YHVH* in love. Within this hall, Moses was gathered in love, for he kissed kisses of love; this is the hall of Moses. This spirit is a spirit of love, a spirit of union, emanating love to all sides.[100]

"These twelve lights ascend and flash. From their scintillation, four holy living beings radiate forth, beloved of love. These are called great living beings—joining with the smaller beings that are contained within them, as is written: *living beings, small with great* (Psalms 104:25). These embrace one another on four sides, just like a nut that is composed of four sections; accordingly this hall is called 'The Nut Garden,' as is written: *I descended to the nut garden* (Song of Songs 6:11). What is meant by *to the nut garden*? I descended for the sake of the nut garden—the hall of love, so that male and female might unite.[101]

"These four divide into twelve; three on each side. All those below are comprised within them; within abide spirits in spirits, lights in lights, all of them one in another, until they become one. Then this spirit that is composed of all ascends, to be crowned with the spirit above—the one called Heaven—and summons Him to unite together. As

soon as all below are bound together with it, it [the spirit] says: *Oh that he would kiss me with the kisses of his mouth* (Song of Songs 1:2)—then joy abounds to bind spirit with spirit, to be perfected by one another; then—perfection, in a single convergence.[102]

"When this spirit is joined with Him and they consummate one another and illuminate one another with total perfection, as is fitting—through the aspiration of the righteous person's prayer, elevating all fittingly [45a] to this site to join one another in love—then all the halls and all the spirits comprised herein, every single one of the spirits and halls comprised in the totality of Heaven takes the hall and spirit befitting it, to be joined with it and consummated by it, as is fitting, because the sixth spirit called Desire raises them toward them in this unification.[103]

"They are joined as follows: Heaven, a holy spirit above, takes this hall—this spirit called Desire—to kiss one another, unite with one another, and be consummated by one another. This is the mystery: *Jacob kissed Rachel*… (Genesis 29:11). Abraham, the right hand on high, takes the hall of love we have mentioned, the spirit called love, to be bound together, to unite with one another, becoming one. Your mnemonic: *Now I know what a beautiful woman you are!* (ibid. 12:11)—and a woman's beauty consists of the breasts. Isaac, the left hand, takes the hall of the law court, from where all judgments arouse, the spirit called Merit, to unite with one another, to perfect one another, becoming entirely one fittingly. The other prophets take the two halls below, the two spirits Brilliance and Radiance, in the mystery of what is written: *The curves of your thighs*… (Song of Songs 7:2)—to be bound with one another and perfected by one another, becoming one. Joseph the Righteous, pillar of the world, takes the hall of Sapphire, the spirit called Sapphire Pavement. And even though it is written *And beneath His feet was like a fashioning of sapphire pavement* (Exodus 24:10), out of respect for the

King, assuredly it is so! Later, this pillar takes more—mystery of mysteries—in the site of the seventh hall.[104]

"Thus far the rungs are joined, uniting with one another to be consummated by one another so all will be one, everything as is fitting. Then: *YHVH is Elohim*… (1 Kings 18:39). Happy in this world and in the world that is coming is the share of one who knows how to bind them, to cleave to his Lord! Here pertains kneeling, prostration, bowing, spreading of palms, and falling on the face—to draw down the favor of the supreme spirit, the soul of all souls, suspended above, beyond, unto Infinity, from which radiance and blessings stream, to perfect all from above as is fitting, so that all might be in perfection from below and from above, all faces resplendent on every side, fittingly. Then all decrees of judgment are abolished and every desire fulfilled above and below. Of this is written *He said to me, 'You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory'* (Isaiah 49:3), and similarly *Happy the people who has it so, happy the people whose God is YHVH!* (Psalms 144:15).[105]

"Seventh hall. This hall contains no actual image; all is in concealment. Within the mystery of mysteries, a curtain is drawn—so that the two cherubim may not be seen. Inside, the purging cover is found—image of the Holy of Holies. Accordingly this hall is called the Holy of Holies. This Holy of Holies is the place arrayed for the supreme soul, totality of all, the world that is coming vis-à-vis this world.[106]

"When all the spirits are joined together—consummated by one another, as is fitting—then the supreme spirit, the soul of all, arouses beyond, to the Concealed of all Concealed, to be stimulated on behalf of all, to illuminate them from above to below, to perfect them and kindle lamps. When all is in perfection through the radiance of all, and the transcendent radiance descends, then this seventh hall is a hall concealed in the concealment of all, to receive the Holy of Holies, the descending radiance, to be

filled from there like a female impregnated and filled by a male—filled solely from this hall, which is arrayed to receive the supernal radiance. This is the mystery: The seventh hall is the site of the union of coupling—that seventh might be joined with seventh, that all [45b] might become a single perfection, as is fitting.[107]

"Happy is the share of one who knows how to bind this unification—beloved above, beloved below; the blessed Holy One decrees and he abolishes! Could one possibly conceive that he contests his Lord?! Not so! It is simply because when he binds bonds and knows how to actualize unification—and all faces are resplendent, and utter perfection prevails, and everything is blessed, as is fitting—all judgments are removed and abolished, and judgment is not to be found in the world. Happy is his share in this world and in the world that is coming! This is he below, of whom is written *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25)—sustaining pillar of the world. Every day a herald proclaims concerning him: *You will rejoice in YHVH, and glory in the Holy One of Israel* (Isaiah 41:16).[108]

"Similarly, sacrifice: Smoke ascends, and all are provided for, as is fitting; priests with devotion and Levites with fragrance of song. One is comprised in the other, and hall enters hall, and spirit spirit, until they are joined in their place, fittingly—limb with limb, consummating one another, uniting with each other, finally becoming one, illuminating one another. Then the supreme soul of all arrives from on high, illuminating them; and all the lamps scintillate in perfection, as is fitting, so the supernal light arouses, and everything enters the Holy of Holies—which is blessed and filled like a well of flowing waters, never ceasing—and all are blessed, above and below.[109]

"Here is the mystery of mysteries: That which is unknown, beyond calculation—Will forever ungrasped—sweetens within, within, among them; but that Will remains

unknown, not grasped to be fathomed. Then all is a single will unto Infinity, and all is in perfection, below and above, inside and within, so that all becomes one. This Will does not enter within, even though it is unknown, until all is first perfected and illuminated on all sides. Then that ungrasped Will secretly sweetens deep within. Happy then is the share of one who cleaves to his Lord at that moment! Happy is he above; happy below! Of him is written *Your father and mother will rejoice, she who bore you will exult* (Proverbs 23:25).[110]

"Come and see: As soon as all are consummated by one another and are bound to one another in a single bond, and the supreme soul illumines them from the aspect on high—all lights forming one luminary in perfection—then a single Will of Thought grasps the ungrasped, unknown radiance; only that Will of Thought grasps, though it knows not what it grasps. But that Will of Thought is illuminated and sweetened; and all is filled and all is perfected and everything is illuminated and fragrantly tempered, as is fitting. Of this is written *Happy the people who has it so…* (Psalms 144:15).[111]

"Whoever is privileged to cleave to his Lord in this way inherits all worlds. He is beloved above, beloved below. His prayer does not return unfulfilled. He takes liberties before his Lord like a son before his father, who fulfills his desire and every need. His awe prevails upon all creatures. He decrees and the blessed Holy One fulfills. About him is written *You will decree and it will be fulfilled for you, light will shine upon your ways* (Job 22:28)."[112]

היכלות פקודי

Heikhalot Pequdei

HALLS OF PEQUDEI

Rabbi Shim’on said, “We have already learned concerning those halls that they abide-in-waiting to sequence the arrangement of the praise of the blessed Holy One—whether the arrangement that is actualized through word or the arrangement that is actualized through aspiration. For there is an arrangement that abides to be known and contemplated, and there is an arrangement that abides in aspiration, so as to perceive higher and higher unto Infinity—where all intentions and thoughts are embedded, not abiding in word at all. Rather, just as It is concealed, so all Its matters are in concealment.[1]

“Come and see what we have said regarding all those halls: all the arrangements follow a single principle: so that low can be comprised in high.[2]

“But come and see: When Moses arranged his prayer for Israel’s sake, he prolonged that prayer, for it is prayer that pertains above; but when he arranged his prayer in brief, he did not prolong, for it pertains below, as is written: *God, pray, heal her, pray!* (Numbers 12:13)—prolonging no more, for he is master of the house and commanded his house accordingly [245a]. That is why he did not prolong his supplication any more.[3]

“So, all arrangements are to ensconce *Shekhinah* in the world, as we have established through all those other halls we mentioned.”[4]

Rabbi Shim’on arose and said, “Happy is your share, Adam—select of all the creations in the world! For the blessed Holy One exalted you above all, and set you in the Garden of Eden, preparing for you seven canopies within, to revel in the pleasure of sublime delight, as is said: *To gaze upon the delightfulness of YHVH, to contemplate in His temple* (Psalms 27:4). *To gaze upon the delightfulness of YHVH*—above; *to contemplate in His temple*—below. *To gaze upon the delightfulness of YHVH*—in the seven firmaments above; *to contemplate in His temple*—in the seven firmaments below. These abide correspondingly to one another. You stood in all of them in the Garden of Eden; the seven supernal, holy canopies were poised over you above with which to be adorned; in the seven below you stood in which to delight. Your Lord perfected you with all of them, to be entirely consummate; until your legs went astray after wicked counsel and you were banished from the Garden of Eden, inflicting death upon yourself and the entire world, because you abandoned the bliss of above and below, and were drawn after impure desires called Poison of Asps—after which the body is drawn, not the soul, as is said: *the pitiless poison of asps* (Deuteronomy 32:33), and it is written: *Their grapes are grapes of poison* (ibid., 32)—until Abraham the pious appeared, and began to repair the world and entered within holy faith, restoring above and below, within the upper and lower firmaments.[5]

“Those below are halls for the upper firmaments, to embrace each other and be bound with one another, as we have established regarding the halls we have mentioned. And even though we have established there in a general way, we must elaborate the matter—to arrange the unification fittingly, so that the Companions will not err, and will walk the straight path, as is written: *For the ways of YHVH are right; the righteous walk in them* [*while transgressors stumble in them*] (Hosea 14:10).[6]

“First hall. Beginning within faith—inauguration to the mystery of faith, and within the visionary levels of faith. Through this, true prophets would see the speculum that does not shine. And because this is the beginning of faith, it is written *Beginning YHVH spoke through Hosea* (Hosea 1:2)—he saw through this rung, beginning of all rungs ascending above, end of all rungs descending below.[7]

“Because Hosea saw from within this beginning—end of all rungs—he was required [to take the woman of whoredom], because Israel went astray and were lured from there below, to the site called Woman of Whoredom, because they forsook and did not cleave to this Woman of Valor. From there he beheld all the halls on the side of impurity, containing halls of defilement—all of them defiling whoever clings to them.[8]

“So it is written: *take yourself a wife of whoredom*… (Hosea 1:2). Now, does this befit a faithful prophet?! It was only because it is forbidden for a person to enter those halls, so that he will not be lured after them—just as Noah was, as is written: *He drank of the wine and became drunk, and exposed himself* (Genesis 9:21). Hosea was terrified of gazing upon those halls through which Israel were defiled and to which they clung, until He said to him: *take yourself a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom*. It is written: *So he went and took Gomer daughter of Diblaim* (Hosea 1:3)—to know to what they clung and by what they were defiled, forsaking the mystery of faith for the sake of alien god. So, he beheld from within this hall, beginning of all rungs.[9]

“This hall is the beginning of all, to ascend through levels. This hall is an abode poised in radiance to be adorned with its degrees, with those levels, as is written: *They saw the God of Israel* (Exodus 24:10).[10]

“In this hall is a ministering prince named טהריאל (*Tohari’el*); he presides over the opening of the hall. For all the souls that ascend, this prince stands by that side—many

other deputies with him, all of them flaming fire, fiery scepters in hand, all of them [245b] masters of eyes. This prince is stationed in this side; if the soul is worthy of entering, she enters. This prince opens the opening and she is admitted.[11]

"If she is not worthy, another prince stationed in the other side lies in waiting, countless thousands and myriads of wardens of judgment with him. The other holy prince thrusts her away, while this other one in the side of impurity seizes her, and ushers her into the impure halls. All the wardens of judgment clutch her until they bring her down to Hell, where she is judged for twelve months—array of the Other Side, a law court to judge the wicked.[12]

"Correspondingly, the holy prince presiding over the opening: All the prayers that pierce atmospheres and firmaments to enter before the King—if the prayer of a congregation, he opens the opening and allows the prayer to enter, so that all the world's prayers become a crown upon the head of Righteous One, as has been established. If the prayer of an individual, it ascends until it reaches the opening of this hall—where the prince is stationed. If the prayer is deemed worthy of entering before the Holy King, he immediately opens the opening and ushers it in. If not deemed worthy, he thrusts it away; and it descends and drifts throughout the world, coming to rest in the lowest firmament of those firmaments below which conduct the world.[13]

"In that firmament presides a prince named סהדיאל (*Sahadi'el*), ordained over this expanse. He takes all these rejected prayers, called 'blemished prayers,' and he stores them away until that person is judged. If he returns to his Lord fittingly, and prays another pure prayer—when that prayer ascends, this prince *Sahadi'el* takes the [blemished] prayer and raises it above until it meets up with the pure prayer and they commingle as one, entering before the King.[14]

“Sometimes when the prayer is rejected—for the person is drawn after the Other Side and is defiled by that side—the prince in the impure Other Side takes it. Then the impure Other Side arises, ascends, and recounts that person’s sins before the blessed Holy One and accuses him above.[15]

“So, when all prayers and all souls ascend, they all ascend and stand before this hall. And this prince presides over the opening of this hall, either to usher in souls and prayers, or to repel them without.[16]

“Above this opening there is another opening, which the blessed Holy One dug. Three times a day it is opened and is not locked, waiting for penitents who shed tears in their prayers before their Lord. All the gates and openings are locked until [prayers] are permitted to enter, aside from these gates called Gates of Tears.[17]

“When this tearful prayer ascends above to enter those gates, the *ophan*, wheel, named רחמיאל (*Raḥami’el*), who presides over six hundred magnificent beings, appears, and he takes the prayer in those tears; and the prayer ascends and is bound above. Those tears are inscribed in that opening.[18]

“There are other tears—eternally inscribed on all the supernal chariots—that are never erased. These are the tears that were shed above and below when the Temple was destroyed, as is written: *Behold, the Erelim cried outside; angels of peace weep bitterly* (Isaiah 33:7); as well as the tears shed over the righteous and virtuous when they depart the world. The chariots receive all of them and blend them with the tears that were shed over the destruction of the Temple. About this is written *YHVH Elohim will wipe away tears from all faces* (ibid. 25:8). Which faces? These holy, supernal chariots. Afterward: *and remove the disgrace of His people from the whole earth—for YHVH has spoken* (ibid.).[19]

“In this hall there is a spirit called סטוטריה (*Situtriyah*); it has the appearance of sapphire, sparkling in every direction; this one inheres to two sides. From these, sparks branch out like the shimmer of a lamp, as we have established in various aspects. Many [246a] hues flame forth from this one to the right side.[20]

“When the supernal firmament—the river flowing and gushing from Eden—pours forth souls to enter within the seventh hall, the seventh hall receives them. And when the holy souls emerge from within the seventh hall, they flow forth; and this holy spirit named *Situtriyah*, who is to the right, receives them. All the souls destined to fly out to virtuous males, who are to the right—he takes them all, and they linger there until they merge with female souls.[21]

“For from this spirit another spirit emerges to the left; visible, then concealed and comprised within the first spirit, becoming one, intertwined. This other spirit is called סנוגיא אדיריה (*Adiryah Sanogya*). This is the spirit on the left.[22]

“This one stands poised—for when the yearning of the seventh hall is to join with the flowing, gushing river, the desire ascending from below upward obtains souls through its desire, and they are female. And when the desire of the river descends, joining from above downward, male souls are fashioned. Desire above yields males; desire below yields females. When these female souls pour forth from within that hall, they descend until they reach this left spirit —called *Adiryah* and called לבנת הספיר (*Livnat ha-Sappir*), Pavement of Sapphire, as we have established in different aspects. As soon as the female souls reach this spirit, this spirit receives them and they abide within.[23]

“Afterward, the spirit of the left fuses with the spirit of the right; and then they become souls comprising male and female as one. They couple and fly forth from this hall and separate out among human beings, as is fitting.[24]

“When the spirit of the left comes to merge in the right, they strike one another, fusing; and sparks scatter,

emanating in every direction. From them *ophanim*, wheels, come into being—from the sparks shooting out of the left spirit—of whom is written *The appearance of the wheels and their design*… (Ezekiel 1:16). These are the *ophanim* that flame fire; they abide in song.[25]

"Once spirit is tempered by spirit—fused as one—a radiance flashes forth, ascending and descending, settling on the four rows of *ophanim*—namely a living being ruling over them, called בזק (*Bazaq*), Spark. This Spark shines from the scintillating light within the flame and rules over all the *ophanim*.[26]

"One expanse extends from it, resting upon two supports. The two supports are two cherubs—one on this side, and one on that; the expanse is over their heads, as is written: *I looked, and on the expanse over the heads of the cherubs* (Ezekiel 10:1)—this is not the expanse over the heads of the living beings. This Spark is empowered over it; the supreme comprised spirit over all.[27]

"All the prayers offered early—before Israel complete all their prayers—linger in this expanse; and this Spark ruling over the expanse embellishes them until Sandalfon—the chief prince, the supreme spirit ruling over all—arrives. When Israel complete all the prayers, he takes them from the expanse and ascends, weaving them as wreaths for his Lord, as has been established.[28]

"This Spark arises to enumerate all the prayers that ascend, as well as all the words of Torah adorned in the night. When the north wind arouses and night is split, whoever rises and engages Torah—all these words ascend, and this Spark takes them and deposits them in this expanse until day rises.[29]

"After day rises, those words ascend and alight upon the site of the expanse in which are suspended stars, constellations, sun, and moon, called Book of Remembrance, as is written: *and it was written in the book*

of remembrance in His presence (Malachi 3:16)—because book and remembrance are in a single nexus.[30]

"The four wheels move on twelve supports. The four are: אהניאל, קדומיאל, מלכיאל, יהדוניה (*Ahani'el, Qadumi'el, Malki'el, Yahadonyah*), the keys of the holy name in their hands.[31]

"These four are comprised [246b] in the mystery of the letters אדני (*Adonai*), which Sandalfon the master of chariots wields. These four soar through the air, for the air is composed of the letters of the holy name יוד (*yod*), הא (*he*), ואו (*vav*), הא, (*he*). The air absorbs them and these interlace with those; and those four receive them through the mystery of the Spark.[32]

"These four enter four—these in those—as is written: *the loops opposite one another* (Exodus 36:12), as we have already established. The mystery is: to be comprised within one another, intertwining, by the mystery of the comprised spirit, in the mystery of the holy name, comprising this name in that name.[33]

"Everything in this hall is conducted and propelled by that spirit, by the mystery of the holy name ruling over all. In this hall is יאהדונהי (*YAHDVNHY*), totality of two names, because it is spirit within spirit. When this name is composed of the mystery of spirit within spirit, intertwined, then everything shines—and light ascends and descends, like sunlight in water, as we have established.[34]

"Then everything moves on account of this spirit, as is written: *wherever the spirit would go, they went, not turning as they went* (Ezekiel 1:12). When this spirit illumines through this name, then everything interconnects; and all is bound as one to ascend above through the mystery of this holy name.[35]

"In the middle of this hall stands a pillar, thrust from this hall to the second hall by which the spirit below ascends to the spirit above, as is said: *there is one spirit for them* (Ecclesiastes 3:19).[36]

“This pillar standing in the middle is named אדרהניאל (*Adrahani’el*), and the mysteries of the keys of the holy name are in his hand. When prayers ascend and reach this pillar, everything in the hall moves to within the second hall to be joined together, so that all will be in a single mystery, to unite above and below as one, so that the holy name will be complete, as is fitting.[37]

“Second hall. This hall abides within the mystery of faith to unite with the mystery above. This hall is more hidden and concealed than the first.[38]

“In this hall there are three openings and a ministering prince above them named אורפניאל (*Orpeni’el*). This prince rules over three directions of the world: south, north, and east; south from this side, north from that side, and east in the center. The three openings are to these three directions —two are sealed shut and one in the center is open, in the mystery of the verse *and like the essence of heaven for purity* (Exodus 24:10). This prince is assigned the opening that is open, and under his charge are two other princes, appointed over the other sealed openings.[39]

“All the souls of those put to death by the court or those slain by the other nations are entrusted to their charge. The prince presiding over them engraves their images in his garments—which are blazing fire—and ascends above, displaying them to his Lord. Then He takes those slain by the other nations and engraves them in His purple robe.[40]

“As for those put to death by the court, the prince brings them down and ushers them behind the two sealed openings over which the two other princes preside. From there they behold the glory of all those who fulfilled the Torah and observed His commandments. They are ashamed of themselves and are scorched by their canopy, until the prince presiding over them opens for them the gate of the east and illumines them—bestowing upon them life, opening through the gate of the east. In the prince’s hand is

a light of life, full of lights, called ‘Cup of Consolation,’ ‘Cup of Life’; for on account of another cup they drank previously they merit this.[41]

“Similarly on the Other Side, in the hall of impurity, there is another prince; and in his hands, a chalice called ‘*Cup of Staggering*,’ ‘*Cup of His Wrath*’ (Isaiah 51:17). As we have learned: There is wine and then there is wine! There is a cup and then there is a cup! Everything is: this for good; this for ill. Wine for good, as is written: *Wine that gladdens the human heart* (Psalms 104:15); wine for ill, as is written: *with foaming wine fully mixed*… (ibid. 75:9); cup for good, as is written: *I raise the cup of salvation* (ibid. 116:13); cup [247a] for ill, as is written: *cup of His wrath, cup of staggering*.[42]

“Just as on the side of holiness there are halls and princes entirely for good, and holy spirits and all holy aspects, so too on the side of impurity there are halls and princes entirely for ill, and ordained impure spirits and all impure aspects—one corresponding to the other, like the good impulse and the evil impulse; all is in a single mystery.[43]

“This hall is called ‘Hall of זהר (*Zohar*), Radiance,’ because it contains the spirit called *Orpeni’el*—a radiance that does not change, sustained by the concealed brilliance shining from above and the brilliance shining below. When the brilliance below strikes the higher brilliance this spirit shines—like the vision of the eye, for when it rolls it emits a sparkling, radiant light; so too this spirit.[44]

“So he is called *Orpeni’el*, illumining this hall and illumining the first hall, for the first spirit shines openly from this spirit, which is concealed. This spirit journeys above and journeys below in the mystery of what is written: *The curves of your thighs like ornaments* (Song of Songs 7:2). As for saying *The curves*—because there is another spirit that emerges from it to the left side, and joins with it. So it is written: *curves*—two. This left spirit is called הדרניאל

(*Hadrani'el*); they merge together, comprised as one, and they are *the essence of heaven* (Exodus 24:10)—blended of fire and water.[45]

"It is written: *Like the appearance of the bow in the cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance—the appearance of the image of the presence of YHVH* (Ezekiel 1:28). This first spirit *Orpeni'el*—concealed between above and below, shining—is like חשמל (*ḥashmal*). It is like *ḥashmal*; but sometimes it is *ḥashmal*; for all the *seraphim*—חיוון ממללן (*ḥeivan memallelan*), speaking beings, beings actualized and not actualized—arise from it; *ḥashmal*.[46]

"Through אורפניאל (*Orpeni'el*), of whom we have spoken, life is made manifest in the world. When the world is judged for good, this spirit illumines; and all life and all joy pervade. For as soon as merit issues forth and judgments shine, then this spirit illuminates. Your mnemonic: *In the light of the king's face is life* (Proverbs 16:15). When the world is tried in judgment, the impure Other Side dominates and is energized, while this spirit is concealed and darkens. Then the whole world abides in judgment and is tried. Everything depends on this spirit. Your mnemonic: *his knees knocked together* (Daniel 5:6).[47]

"Here are found all the garments of the souls of the righteous—who ascend to appear before their Lord, to stand in His presence. When the soul ascends and reaches this hall, a certain prince appointed over the garments—named צדקיאל (*Tsadqi'el*)—appears. For whenever a person performs commandments of Torah in this world, so—corresponding to how he exerted himself—is fashioned for him in this hall on high a garment in which to be adorned in that world.[48]

"When the soul ascends, that prince takes her garment and accompanies her until he reaches the River of Fire, where the soul is required to bathe and be purified. Sometimes the soul drowns there and is burned—and does

not ascend the whole day. In the morning, when the south wind stirs, all of them arise and are renewed, chanting song and singing—just like the angels whose dominion is withdrawn and are burned, rising renewed as before, chanting song, going on their way; so too these souls.[49]

"If this soul is worthy and ascends, the prince צדקיאל (*Tsadqi'el*) takes the soul and adorns her with that garment—and she is arrayed within, ascending as an offering at the hand of Michael the Priest, to endure always for all days before the Ancient of Days. Happy is the share of the soul that rises and attains this![50]

"This spirit אורפניאל (*Orpeni'el*), of whom we have spoken, is in charge of all; he rules over this hall.[51]

"From this totality—when spirit coalesces with spirit, striking one another, merging as one—are created the other rulers appointed over the world—the six-winged *seraphim*, who sanctify their Lord thrice [247b] daily. These are they who deal strictly with the righteous—even to a single strand of hair. These are they who stand ready to punish—in this world and in the world that is coming—those who belittle a person from whom they have learned even a single word of Torah, not treating him with respect, as well as all those who exploit whoever studies the six orders of Mishnah to enact the unification of their Lord.[52]

"When spirit is embedded within spirit, illumining as one, there flashes forth from that radiance a living being that presides over the *seraphim*—four beneath it, their faces the faces of an eagle. This living being is named יופיאל (*Yofi'el*); he presides over all mysteries of wisdom, and all the keys of wisdom are found with him.[53]

"This living being rises to demand reward from the blessed Holy One, to bestow it upon all those who pursue all the masters of wisdom learning wisdom to know their Lord—indeed, even from every person. This is the reward he bestows upon human beings who pursue wisdom to know their Lord: When a person departs this world, this living

being sets out on four soaring *seraphim*, flying toward him; and he does not allow all those wardens of judgment of the Other Side to approach him. Many are the emissaries of peace surrounding him! When these *seraphim* journey and appear, the fiery serpents that emerged from the serpent—who inflicted death upon the whole world—are subdued.[54]

"This holy living being stands poised. When the soul ascends and reaches him, he asks her about a mystery of wisdom of his Lord; and in accordance with the wisdom pursued and apprehended, so is her reward granted her. If one was able to apprehend yet did not apprehend, she is thrust aside and does not enter; and she remains beneath that hall in shame. When the *seraphim* beneath [the living being] raise their wings, then all of them beat their wings and burn her—and she is burned and not burned, abiding and not abiding; so is she judged the whole day—illumining, not illumining—even though she possesses good deeds.[55]

"For there is no reward in that world like [the reward] of those who delve into wisdom, contemplating the glory of their Lord; and there is no limit to the reward of those who know wisdom, perceiving the glory of their Lord. Happy is their share in the world that is coming, as is written: *Happy is the person who finds wisdom, the person who attains understanding* (Proverbs 3:13)![56]

"This spirit rules over all. All are comprised within it. All gaze toward it.[57]

"The living being [*Yofi'el*] presides over four others—each one with four *galgalim*, spheres. One sphere faces the east; one sphere faces the north; one sphere faces the south; and one sphere faces the west. Each one has three supports. The sphere on the east is named חניאל (*Ḥani'el*); the sphere on the north is named קרשיאל (*Qarashi'el*); the sphere on the south is named עזריאל (*Azri'el*); the sphere on the west is named עניאל (*Ani'el*). The three supports of each one all face the center, for the center propels them; all of them move by virtue of the center.[58]

“Those stationed in the center are all appointed over song. Those on the right intone song—raising desire above, reciting ‘Holy.’ Those on the left intone song—raising desire above, reciting ‘Blessed.’ Holy above, blessed below. Those stationed above on the right take up the *Qedushah* and join in the *Qedushah* with all those who know how to sanctify their Lord in union, in the mystery of wisdom. Those stationed on the left take up the *Qedushah* and join in the *Qedushah* with all those who do not know how to sanctify their Lord fittingly. They all combine with one another in a single unity, binding together so that they all become one cluster, one spirit—linking with those above so that all becomes one, merging with one another.[59]

“From this site imbibe all the masters of wisdom who stand ready to perceive through a vision or through the mystery of a dream. For prophets imbibe from above, but the masters of a dream or vision imbibe from here. When this site unites with the site above in a single nexus, then all prophets imbibe totally, from above and below in a single bond.[60] [248a]

“For this reason their words are parabolic—their prophecy not fully lucent as was the case with Moses, who was totally lucent in his prophecy. For when the radiance streamed from the site from which all lights spring and reached his rung, so did he imbibe his prophecy, illumining—which was not so for all the other prophets.[61]

“As for masters of a dream and masters of vision, all of them imbibe from this site below—not connected above—through another rung beneath, external. Just as with the rung of the prophets above—the prophets beholding solely through another rung below—so too with these; the rung of their imbibing is above, through this lower rung, though revealed to them only through another rung without, beneath.[62]

“Because the matter emanates from this hall and extends to the prince presiding over the gate of this hall,

and from there to the prince beneath him, and so on to all of them—for there are many who convey the word mingling with it—so, by the time it reaches the human being there are many who mingle with it; and consequently the matter is not fully lucent.[63]

"When these four spheres connect with the four in the center, they are all called 'precious,' and they are the masters of vision. Accordingly, the living being that we have mentioned rules over them; and accordingly Daniel was called 'precious man,' as is written: *for you are precious* (Daniel 9:23); it is all a mystery, as is fitting. Happy are they who know the mysteries of their Lord to walk the path of truth in this world and in the world that is coming![64]

"Third hall. This hall is a hall that abides in supernal radiance more than all the preceding. Four openings are found in this hall—one to the south, one to the east, one to the north, and one to the west. In every single opening there is one prince, for a prince presides over every opening.[65]

"First opening. This is the opening in which is stationed a prince named מלכיאל (*Malki'el*). He presides over all the decrees issuing from the court of the King by which the world is judged, for he is appointed to oversee these decrees. Two scribes are under his charge—one on the right, and one on the left.[66]

"To this one is granted to emend the configuration of the decrees before they go out of this gate and are submitted to the prince in the first hall; for once they are submitted to that first prince, they issue forth from there—and it is not permitted to return them. For immediately a prince of the impure Other Side [appears], master of fiercely severe judgment, merciless, named סנגדיאל (*Sangadi'el*). He is appointed over the gate of the first hall of the Other Side, which is Hell. How many are the wardens of

judgment—empowered to soar through the world, ready to execute judgment![67]

"For this reason, the prince stands poised to examine the decrees, as well as the two scribes stationed beneath this prince—שמשיאל (*Shamshi'el*) and קמואל (*Qemu'el*)—scribes to emend decrees; the prince מלכיאל (*Malki'el*) above them. Because in the halls in the impure Other Side, specific princes are ordained—the inverse of these princes in these halls; and all those spirits and all those princes are entirely malevolent.[68]

"Come and see: When this סנגדיאל (*Sangadi'el*) receives the decree from the side of the prince stationed by the first opening, he opens an entrance to the dimension of darkness called Pit of Destruction. There thousands and myriads of deputies lie in wait to seize the decrees—this prince above them. Then heralds come forth and countless wardens sweep [248b] through the world, and judgment is fulfilled. And so this prince is stationed to examine the decrees and to emend the ways of the decrees before they go forth from this opening. This opening is the opening of the south.[69]

"Second opening. This is the opening upon which life and death depend, because in this opening the seals of all the decrees are signed. For once the decrees are duly emended, an attendant named גזריאל (*Gazri'el*) appears and takes the decrees in this second opening.[70]

"A prince stands over that opening named עזריאל (*Azri'el*); every single opening is called by the name of the prince appointed over it. Under the dominion and charge of this prince are two attendants—their names סטריה (*Sitriyah*) and עדיאל (*Adi'el*)—one on the right, one on the left. Life depends on the one on the right; death depends on the one on the left. Two seals are in their hands: the seal of life and the seal of death. One stands on this side, one on that.[71]

"This opening is shut all six days; but on the Sabbath and the new moon, it is opened to indicate life in that seal

upon which life depends—for the seal of life prevails on Sabbath and new moon.[72]

"On Yom Kippur—when all Israel stand in prayer and supplication, striving in the service of their Lord—the opening remains closed, until the hour of the *Minḥah* prayer. As soon as the *Minḥah* prayer passes, a current of air flows forth from the site of the court of the Hall of Merit; and this opening opens. The prince of this hall arises, as well as the two attendants—one on the right and one on the left, seals of life and death in their hands, all decrees of the world before them—whereupon they sign, whether for life or death. This is the opening of the east.[73]

"Third opening. This is the opening that is stationed enduringly to ascertain all those whom judgment will befall, whether sickness, or pain, or poverty—judgment not pertaining to death. When the gate of this opening is shut, judgment is inscribed upon a person that cannot be rescinded—except through the power of potent prayer and complete repentance—as is written: *A man He locks up cannot be freed* (Job 12:14).[74]

"A prince presides over this opening named קפציאל (*Qaphtsi'el*), ordained over this opening in order to close the opening to the person deserving of punishment, so that he will not be received in prayer until he returns before his Lord.[75]

"The moment that judgment is decreed upon his children, who have not sinned—tender youths—an ordained attendant under his charge named עיריאל (*Iri'el*) goes forth and proclaims to the left side; whereupon a spirit arouses, called 'defective spirit,' created on the moon's defectiveness—called אסכרא (*Askara*), Diphtheria. This is the spirit that presides over the fourth rung in the third hall in the impure side; this one presides over their slaughter, appearing to the youths like a woman who rears children, seizing them and slaughtering them.[76]

“Then this soul ascends and this prince embraces her, raising her to the prince presiding over the fourth hall. That prince rears them and delights in them, and raises them to appear before the holy King every single Sabbath and every single new moon. They appear before Him and are blessed by Him. Whenever fury reigns, the blessed Holy One gazes upon them and has compassion on the world.[77]

“All those children who have not completed their years—until thirteen years and one day—are all handed over to this one. From thirteen to twenty years—they are all handed over to a different spirit. This spirit is called אגירסון (*Agirison*), who emerged from the tortuous serpent that inflicted death upon the whole world, and who is the evil impulse. From twenty years and higher, a person is judged by the court—the site called Merit. He himself is judged—and is handed over to the serpent who is the angel of death.[78]

“For look, from twenty years and lower until thirteen years, the spirit that is active [249a] within him like a serpent pursues him—namely *Agirison* whom we have just mentioned—because he was not appropriately on guard when he was a small child. He discerns in him some sign that he will eventually become blemished, and so he is taken away without permission. About this is written *Some are swept away without justice* (Proverbs 13:23). This is the mystery written *and behold, it was very good* (Genesis 1:31). We have learned: *and behold, it was very good*—this is the Angel of Death, who pre-empts him, before he becomes blemished later on. The prince presiding over this opening ushers in his soul and raises her above.[79]

“From thirteen years and lower: his father is judged, and he [the son] is judged for his [the father’s] sins and is handed over to *Askara*, Diphtheria, as we have mentioned.[80]

“Each and every one—hall corresponding to hall, one the inverse of the other—as we have said. This opening is to the north.[81]

“Fourth opening. This opening pertains to healing and is called ‘Opening of Healing.’ In this opening is stationed a prince named פדיאל (*Padi’el*), presiding over all the remedies for the world, to convey the prayers of all the pained, sick, and afflicted; he ascends in all those prayers and brings them before the blessed Holy One.[82]

“He is *an angel, an advocate, one among a thousand* (Job 33:23). And it is written: *then He is gracious to him and says*, ‘פדעהו (*Peda’ehu*), *Spare him, from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom*’ (ibid., 24)—for he ascends in that prayer and acts as a good advocate on the person’s behalf—recalling the merit he accumulated before the Holy King—for this one always acts for good. So, all [healing] inheres in this opening in which *Padi’el* is appointed. This opening is to the west.[83]

“For this reason, these four openings are found in this hall.[84]

“In this hall inheres a spirit called נגה (*Nogah*), Brilliance; this is the spirit ruling this hall; all splendor and every desire abiding within. This is who confirms all those who have a share in the world that is coming, adorning those souls with radiant glory, so that all the spirits in the other halls will recognize that he is a scion of the world that is coming, and he will pass through all of them with no one hindering him.[85]

“This spirit is the purest and clearest of those below, named זהריאל (*Zohari’el*). Some of the holy anointing oil flowing from the World that is Coming streams upon him; from that oil he was created and sprang. This one is a lamp, as is said: *I have prepared a lamp for my anointed* (Psalms 132:17), because this is the array to kindle lights below, when the radiance streaming from on high alights upon him—for this one is arrayed when all the lower ones below merge with him.[86]

“When this spirit is arrayed with all those below, illumining, he emits a single light named אהדיאל (*Ahadi’el*),

comprised within this spirit. This one is situated beneath this spirit to anoint all the souls that ascend—that have a share in the world that is coming and are entitled to ascend above.[87]

"For when the soul ascends and enters those lower halls, she is inscribed with the twenty-two letters of Torah. When the soul is worthy and stands before the spirit, this prince *Ahadi'el* anoints them—and they ascend and enter the River of Fire; they ascend and are offered as an offering.[88]

"This light is composed of three lights, because the anointing oil blends three colors. When this light sparkles, twenty-two lights scintillate from it—corresponding to the twenty-two letters impressed upon that soul. All these twenty-two lights are ordained attendants standing with him; they are all called by the name of this light above them, all included within him.[89]

"This light—together with all those lights—merges with this spirit; and this spirit encompasses him—gazing to settle in the fourth hall.[90]

"When this spirit comprises all of them—this light together with all the lights—and they thrust to shine, [249b] a holy living being shoots forth from them, composed of two semblances—a lion and an eagle—but one form, called אהיאל (*Ahi'el*).[91]

"When the radiance of this supreme spirit impacts this holy living being, four *ophanim*, wheels—composed of all colors—shoot forth from its scintillation. They are: הדריאל (*Hadari'el*), יהדריאל (*Yahadari'el*), אהדוריא (*Ahadoriya*), אסימון (*Asimon*). Each of these has eight wings. These are appointed over all the celestial legions of warriors; for there can never be a war in the world or an uprooting of a kingdom from its realm unless all the celestial legions and the stars of the other firmaments manifest wars and conflicts with one another. These four *ophanim* preside over them to the four directions of the world.[92]

“When these four sally forth to manifest wars from the mystery of the hall above—the court called Merit—they exude innumerable legions and camps from their perspiration, all of them stationed beneath these *ophanim*.[93]

“Some of them preside over song; some of them are emissaries to the world—corresponding to the emissaries of the side of impurity who venture out from its third hall, malevolently harassing the world. These exist correspondingly—so that they will not prevail over those who engage in Torah, as is said: *For He will command His angels to guard you in all your ways* (Psalms 91:11). And it is written: *On their palms they will lift you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone* (ibid., 12). *Against a stone—A stone one strikes against, a rock one stumbles over* (Isaiah 8:14). This is called *A stone one strikes against, a rock one stumbles over* and this is called *a tested stone, precious cornerstone* (ibid. 28:16), *Rock of Israel* (ibid. 30:29)—contrasting entirely with one another.[94]

“From the mystery of the third hall of the Other Side issue two spirits called Wrath and Rage; and from these two emerge all the emissaries who roam to lure human beings from the way of truth. These are they who rise and happen upon the person who is embarking on a commandment. So these *ophanim* rise correspondingly, in order to protect the person from harm. Of these two spirits was Moses afraid when he descended the mountain, as is written: *For I was in dread of the wrath and rage* (Deuteronomy 9:19).[95]

“In the middle of this hall there is another domain situated high above, with four openings to the four directions of the world—and ten deputies for every single opening. One prince is above them, comprised within the light called *Ahadi’el*; this is the significance of *one wheel being inside the other wheel* (Ezekiel 1:16)—intertwined.[96]

“These forty convey the judgment from the Merit-place, striking the soul that sinned—requiring to be lashed. They manifest to those souls in flames of fire, and they soar out of

this hall and lash the soul, which remains rebuked outside all the days decreed upon her.[97]

"These forty arise and rebuke and shun all those who uttered an unseemly word from their mouths, befouling their mouths thereby. These shun them; and for forty days they abide their prayer unheard, not passing through the curtain, remaining rebuked outside.[98]

"Similarly for all those who transgressed such sins that require rebuke: ten heralds come forth every day and proclaim throughout all the firmaments and among all the hosts and camps, 'Be careful of so-and-so, who is rebuked—rebuked for such-and-such a sin!' until he returns to his Lord. May the Compassionate One save us! When he repents of that sin, these forty assemble and release him, whereupon they proclaim about him, 'So-and-so's rebuke is released!' Henceforth his prayer enters. Until he repents, he is rebuked above and below—his Lord's protection withdrawn from him. Even at night, his soul is rebuked—all the portals of heaven sealed shut to her; she does not ascend and is thrust aside.[99]

"When this *ophan* that presides over these forty moves, it reaches the place called תא הרצים (*ta ha-ratsim*), *the chamber of the runners* (1 Kings 14:28; 2 Chronicles 12:11). When it enters, the forty appointed over the four openings enter with it; and all the shields of gold ascend. These are the angels called *ḥashmallim*—shields, swords, and spears—who run to protect Israel from the other [250a] nations, and to wage war on them and wreak vengeance upon them without delay.[100]

"For this reason it is called *the chamber of runners*—the place where the runners run, hastening to battle and wreak vengeance, countering the other runners who run to inflict harm, to impair fortunes and dominate them. This is the mystery of *the runners went out in haste* (Esther 3:15)—runners from this side, runners from that side. Accordingly, your mnemonic: *the city of Shushan rejoices*

and is glad (ibid. 8:15), or alternatively, *is dumbfounded* (ibid. 3:15). If these from here precede—*the city of Shushan rejoices*; if those from Other Side precede—*the city of Shushan is dumbfounded*.[101]

"We have already established: Everything exists in parallel, this side corresponding to that side. Accordingly, these protect all. When these ascend with those, a current of air from above flows forth, and all of them become one shield. Your mnemonic: *I am your shield* (Genesis 15:1).[102]

"Twelve *galgalim*, spheres, circle within this hall; empowered bicolor *seraphim*—white and red, compassion and judgment. These are stationed to constantly watch over all the tormented, whom the other nations pester and oppress. They are called חלונות (*ḥallonot*), windows, as is written: *gazing through the windows* (Song of Songs 2:9).

"These are stationed to look upon all those who offer their prayers—hastening to the synagogue, counted among the first ten. Then they ascend and record them on high, for these are called by them 'companions,' as is written: *companions listen for your voice; let me hear!* (Song of Songs 8:13).[103]

"Happy are the righteous who know how to arrange their prayer fittingly! For when this prayer begins to ascend, these ascend within this prayer, piercing all firmaments and entering all halls until the gate of the highest opening—whereupon that prayer enters before the King to be adorned, as has been explained.[104]

"Come and see: All those who offer prayers and sanctify their Lord with perfect intention—such prayer must be drawn out of thought; with aspiration of spirit and speech. Then the name of the blessed Holy One is sanctified.[105]

"When it reaches those 'companions,' they all take that prayer and proceed with it to the fourth hall, in that opening. These praise while they offer prayers, sanctifying at that time. These are they who are appointed by day,

along with Israel, to be companions with them—not by night, like the others who recite song by night.[106]

"Come and see: It is written: *He who robs his father and mother and says, 'It is no crime,' is partner to a destroyer* (Proverbs 28:24). This has already been established, for he deprives the blessings of the blessed Holy One—who is his father, as is written: *Ask your father, he will inform you* (Deuteronomy 32:7), and similarly: *Your father will rejoice* (Proverbs 23:25), as has been established.[107]

"חבר הוא לאיש משחית (*Ḥaver hu le-ish mashḥit*), *Is partner to a destroyer* (Proverbs 28:24). Who is *ish mashḥit, a man of destruction*? The man who taints the moon, called *a man of perversity* (ibid. 16:28), *a man of slander* (Psalms 140:12), *a skilled hunter, a man of the field* (Genesis 25:27)—*a destroyer*, for he deprives blessings from the world. Similarly, whoever deprives blessings from the world *is partner* to this *destroyer* we have mentioned.[108]

"This is the mystery: For a person must bless the blessed Holy One and offer his prayer fittingly in order that His holy name will be blessed, ויתחבר (*ve-yitḥabbar*), and that he might unite, with these holy חברין (*ḥaverin*), Companions; not tainting his prayer, thereby depriving blessings from the world ויתחבר (*ve-yitḥabbar*), and partnering, with that איש משחית חבר (*ḥaver ish mashhit*), fellow—the destroyer, who deprives blessings from the world and inflicted death upon all.[109]

"It is written: וחובר חבר (*Ve-ḥover ḥaver*), *a chanter of incantations* (Deuteronomy 18:11). What is the significance of *ve-ḥover ḥaver*? Whoever follows the Other Side and engages in witchcraft draws upon himself another impure spirit, ואתחבר (*ve-itḥabbar*), and joins, חברותא (*ḥavruta*), the gang, of the wicked חבר (*ḥaver*), fellow, dwelling בחברותא (*be-ḥavruta*), in companionship, with that fellow—the destroyer. Why is he called חבר (*ḥaver*), fellow? Because the moment a person is born, אתחבר (*itḥabbar*), he joins, with him, always abiding with him—חבר (*ḥaver*), conjoined fellow. Afterward he

transmogrifies into חבר איש משחית (*ḥaver ish mashḥit*), fellow—the destroyer.[110]

"So, on the side of holiness—the right side—there is a good companion, performing kindness with a person in this world and in the world that is coming. These חברים (*ḥaverim*), Companions, are always found above a person in a single חברותא (*ḥavruta*), bond, to save him and protect him, becoming companions with him—to sanctify the name of their Lord and to sing and praise before Him, always.[111]

"From these emerge [250b] four other supports for the twelve we have mentioned—the Companions. These confront those who proffer advice to harm the righteous, or who proceed menacingly; and even though they have not yet acted, they ascend, make the matter known above, and nullify that advice. These are called אראלים (*er'ellim*)—and even though all of them are appointed for this task, every single one is appointed and ordained over specific matters. Beneath these are innumerable [angelic powers].[112]

"These four are stationed to the four directions of the world, each one positioned to that side, all of them watching out. These are called חרכים (*ḥarakim*), crevices, as is said: *peering through the crevices* (Song of Songs 2:9). The names of these four called *ḥarakim*: עיגאל (*Ige'el*), עיריה (*Iryah*), עריאל (*Ari'el*), יהיראל (*Yahire'el*). These are stationed to oversee.[113]

"*Ige'el* is stationed to the east—positioned to watch over all those who perform good deeds, as well as all those who conceive the thought of a commandment even though they are unable to perform it.[114]

"*Iryah* is stationed to the south—positioned to watch over all those who console the poor, or who are aggrieved because of them, even though they are unable to give; as well as over those embarking on a commandment, and those who render kindness to the dead—performing an act of true kindness. This one is appointed to recall him on

high, to engrave his image above, and to usher him into the world that is coming.[115]

"*Ari'el* is stationed to the north—positioned to watch over all those who contemplate perpetrating evil yet do not; or who desire to sin and, on the verge of perpetrating, conquer their impulse and refrain.[116]

"*Yahire'el* is stationed to the west—positioned to watch over all those who toil in Torah, and send their children to school to delve into Torah; as well as over all those who show consideration to the sick on his sickbed, and are attentive to him, apprising him to contemplate his sins and deeds and to repent of them to his Lord. For whoever induces the sick to contemplate his deeds and to turn back to the blessed Holy One in repentance causes him to be saved and his spirit to be restored.[117]

"Of this is written *Happy is the one who considers the poor; on the day of evil YHVH will deliver him* (Psalms 41:2). What is the significance of *on the day of* רעה (*ra'ah*), *evil*? It should read *on the day of* רע (*ra*), *evil*. Well, *on the day of* רעה (*ra'ah*), *evil*—on the day that that evil holds sway to seize his soul. *Happy is the one who considers the poor*—this refers to the sick, as is said: *Why are you so poorly, prince?* (2 Samuel 13:4). Consequently, *on the day of evil YHVH will deliver him*—those who show consideration to the sick, to bring him back from his sins to the blessed Holy One, as we have established. In this hall he [*Yahire'el*] is stationed to watch over him; and on the day when judgment looms over the world, he is saved, as is said: *on the day of evil YHVH will deliver him*—the day that judgment is entrusted to that evil to prevail upon the world. All of these are stationed to oversee.[118]

"On the day of Rosh Hashanah, when the blessed Holy One abides in judgment over the world and the Evil Side arrives to accuse, all of these assemble and arise before the blessed Holy One, whereupon they all adorn themselves and stand in the blessed Holy One's presence. Of that time,

what is written? *Gazing through the windows, peering through the crevices* (Song of Songs 2:9). *Peering*—like one who glimpses through a narrow space, seeing though not seeing all that is required. Afterward, *gazing through the windows*—a larger observation space, for He opens openings to have compassion on all. When the blessed Holy One looks upon the world, He gazes upon these windows and crevices, and takes pity on all.[119]

"Then, when Israel blow the shofar and the voice issuing from the shofar arouses from below—blended of fire, water, and air, the voice fashioned from all of these, so as to arouse the supernal voice issuing from within shofar similarly blended of fire, water, and air—then a herald goes forth and proclaims throughout all the firmaments, saying: *The voice of my beloved, here it comes* [*bounding over mountains, leaping across hills*] (Song of Songs 2:8), *gazing through the windows, peering through the crevices* (ibid., 9).[120]

"Then all know that the blessed Holy One has compassion on Israel, declaring, 'Happy are Israel, who possess advice on earth in order to arouse compassion from above!' Then this verse applies: *Happy is the people who know the blast* (Psalms 89:16). What is meant by *who know the blast*? [251a] יודעי תרועה (*Yode'ei teru'ah*), *Who know the blast*—smashing this blast that is severe judgment, so that they will not be judged thereby. Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming, for they know the ways of the blessed Holy One—and they know how to walk in His ways and actualize unification, as is fitting![121]

"All these windows and crevices stand poised to embrace all the prayers ascending from below above, so that the blessed Holy One might gaze upon them. Correspondingly, any synagogue without windows is not a place for prayer.[122]

"For synagogue parallels synagogue: the synagogue below parallels the synagogue on high—which contains

windows, as we have said; so too below. The Great Synagogue has twelve supernal windows; likewise this synagogue below. Everything exists correspondingly, because worlds are arranged on the pattern of one another. As for the blessed Holy One, His glory transcends all. So, *on the day of evil* (Psalms 41:2)—when the Evil Side prevails, *YHVH will deliver him*.[123]

"Correspondingly, this prince *Yahire'el* stands poised above all those who take pity on the poor, as is said: *Happy is the one who considers the poor* (Psalms 41:1).[124]

"So, everything abides in this hall; and this hall merges with another fourth hall, where are decrees and judgments for all. Accordingly, happy is the share of one who knows the treasures of his Lord, to unify Him and sanctify His name always—meriting this world and the world that is coming!

"Fourth Hall. This is the hall through which the blessed Holy One manifests His dominion on earth. This is the hall that exists to guard the ways of Torah. This hall is called Merit, the hall in which all the cases of the world are judged—all merits, all sins, all punishments, and all rewards for those who observe the commandments of Torah.[125]

"This Hall of Merit is different from all the other halls. Contained within this hall are four halls, all of them different from one another—all one hall. In this hall there is a spirit called זכות (*Zekhut*); this hall is named זכותא (*Zekhuta*), Merit, after him; and this is אל (*El*). All the cases of the world are judged here. This is the mystery of what is written: אל (*El*), *God, rages every day* (Psalms 7:12).[126]

"The four halls that are in this hall—one within the other—are all interconnected; they are all one hall, called Merit. These four halls have four openings. A prince is outside—named סנסניה (*Sansanyah*)—stationed by the first upper opening of the hall. Corresponding to this name, there is another prince on the Other Side of the left who

receives judgments, arousing in his hall to administer judgment in the world. Because he receives from him, he is named *Sansanyah* after him; he presides over children's Diphtheria. When this supernal prince *Sansanyah* receives the judgment, he proclaims to the deputies presiding over the twelve openings; they are the heralds who proclaim all the judgments rendered in the Hall of Merit.[127]

"This spirit, called *Zekhut'el* as we have mentioned, absorbs all; everything is comprised within him. From him emanate seventy sparkling lights, all arranged in a circle—so as to see one another and not be concealed from one another. All merits, all punishments, and all cases stand before all these lights.[128]

"From them radiate two lights, stationed before them always. These lie deep within, in the center of the hall. Mystery of the hall: *Your navel is the basin of the moon. May it never lack blended wine!* (Song of Songs 7:3).[129]

"Corresponding to these are seventy-two other lights from the right side, and seventy-two other lights from the left side. The former are internal. Before these lights all merits enter; from these innermost [lights] all cases of the world proceed. So we find that all the lights emanating from this supernal spirit total two hundred and sixteen lights—all of them contained in this spirit.[130]

"The two lights stationed before the seventy always bear witness and record verdicts of acquittal or guilt. These seventy issue decrees and promulgate judgments, whether for good or ill.[131]

"Here abides this spirit—*Zekhut'el*, whom we have mentioned; three letters are inscribed within him, cleaving from above: י ה ו (*yod, he, vav*). We have already established that when these letters cleave to this site [251b] with the cleaving of male in female, then these letters are impressed within this spirit. Here David said: ואלהי (*ve-elohai*), *and my God, my sheltering rock* (Psalms 94:22)—mystery of this

spirit called אל (*El*), and mystery of the letters inscribed within, called י ה ו (*yod, he, vav*).[132]

"These three series of lights we have mentioned are three courts, allocated for various judgments on worldly affairs: riches, poverty, diseases, and wholeness. For the four halls are arrayed for all these various [affairs]: two halls for these two other series of lights; one hall for all the masters of eyes who keep accounts of all the world's deeds; and one hall for other scribes beneath the former interior ones. These four halls are contained within this hall named after the spirit *Zekhut*, as we have said.[133]

"In every single opening of these halls, there is one prince. In the first opening there is a prince named גזריאל (*Gazri'el*), ordained to reveal the judgments that have been rendered and decreed to the first prince stationed by the first opening of all, named *Sansanyah*, from whom the other prince—presiding over the hall of the Other Side and presiding over children's Diphtheria, as we have mentioned—receives.[134]

"This prince *Gazri'el* receives the word of the inner court, where all is decreed, and then conveys the matter to the prince outside. All the heralds proclaim throughout all the firmaments, saying, 'Such-and-such has been decreed from the palace of the King,' until they receive the word in the hall below. From there they emerge and proclaim the word so that it is heard in all the firmaments, and they descend and communicate the matter to all below. All the lower [deputies] convey the word from rung to rung—even birds of heaven and fowl of the earth all convey the word, disseminating it in the world—until all the wardens of judgment receive the information and show it to people in a dream; and the matter transpires imminently.[135]

"Sometimes, the information is required by the kings of the earth who are ordained to sustain and lead the people, so that the word is conveyed to the firmament of the sun below, where it remains until the ordained attendants

empowered over the sun take the word and convey it to the supreme princes of the Other Side, and they convey the information to the kings of the earth, who are on their side.[136]

"When there were prophets among Israel, they would receive their prophecy from two supernal pillars upon which Torah rests. After prophets disappeared from the world and masters of vision and masters of a dream appeared, they would receive the information from its domain, as we have mentioned. When there were kings among Israel and the prophets disappeared and masters of dream and vision were nowhere to be found, the information was conveyed to the kings from this opening, as we have said.[137]

"Now, should you say, 'How could he receive the word from this place?' Come and see! Every single rung and every single opening has specific princes outside, appointed on their side throughout all the firmaments—extending and descending below throughout the lower firmaments; and they convey the word to those who require it. Because from these halls—which are the side of holiness and are a mystery of faith—rungs branch out below, all of them in the mystery of faith, rungs descending upon rungs, finally flying out into this world, empowered: some to protect human beings from the Other Side and malignities of the world, and on the roads they travel; some to assist human beings when they come to purify themselves; some to perform signs and miracles in the world; and some stationed to witness people's deeds to offer testimony. And so, in this way, countless rungs disperse to their modes, all in the mystery of supernal faith, in supernal holiness.[138]

"Correspondingly on the Other Side, side of impurity, rungs branch out from those halls below—all of them rungs to harass and mislead the world: some poised to lure people from the good path to the evil path; some ready to defile those people [252a] who come to defile themselves, as we

have learned: If a person comes to defile himself, he is defiled in this world and he is defiled in that world. These are called Boiling צואה (*Tso'ah*), Excrement, as is said: 'צא (*Tse*), *Out!' you will call to it* (Isaiah 30:22). These rungs stand poised to defile utterly. Consequently, these are always opposite those; and so everything is in specific levels, as is fitting.[139]

"Second opening. In this opening there is a prince named דהריאל (*Dahari'el*), ordained to usher in all the merits acquired by human beings so that a person might be judged favorably for them. And so, when judged favorably—merits outnumbering one's sins—this prince is appointed over the compensation and share of those merits and their bountiful reward. He conveys the sentence and enjoins the prince in the hall below, called פדיאל (*Padi'el*), saying, פדעהו (*Peda'ehu*), *Spare him, from going down to the pit* (Job 33:24). For when a person is on his sickbed and is seized by the seizure of the King, he is judged; and every merit and sin he performed in this world enter this hall to be tried. When judged favorably, his favorable sentence emerges in this opening to the right—where this prince *Dahari'el* is stationed—and his acquittal is proclaimed, until he is saved. That judgment descends through all those deputies, rungs manifestly beneficent below, all of them rungs upon rungs. That person is judged for all, good or ill, from the palace of the King.[140]

"Third opening. In this opening there is a prince named גדיאל (*Gadi'el*); he is on the left and is ordained to usher in all the sins and all the evils after which a person strayed in this world. He lowers them upon scales, to be weighed against the merits ushered in by the other prince we have mentioned. These scales are stationed within the fourth opening, where merits and sins are weighed together. Whichever of them prevails—accordingly he obtains other deputies. If merits prevail—from the right side many deputies obtain to that side and receive the word of that

judgment and remove evils and illnesses from that person, until he is saved. If sins prevail—from the left side many deputies obtain to that side, until the Other Side and all those wardens of judgment receive the word, so that his fortune turns bad—whereupon the Other Side descends and seizes his soul. Happy is the share of the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming![141]

"Fourth opening. In this opening is stationed a prince named יאזניה (*Yozniyah*), who is the scale that receives merits and sins, upon whom all of them are weighed together. This is called מאזני צדק (*Moznei Tsedeq*), Scales of Equity, as is written: *scales of equity* (Leviticus 19:36). Upon this all are weighed to be judged. Beneath this prince are two deputies—one to the right and one to the left. The one on the right is named הריאל (*Hari'el*); the one on the left is named גדודיאל (*Gedudi'el*). When merits and sins are weighed, this one tips to the right, and this one tips to the left. All of them fuse with the spirit called זכות (*Zekhut*).[142]

"When all of them are incorporated within, he generates a holy living being—flaming—called תומיאל (*Tumi'el*). This living being is the being who is stationed to scrutinize the world, through those 'eyes of *YHVH*' ranging and roaming throughout the world. Here all those 'eyes of *YHVH*' take notice of secret deeds performed in the world, and are aware of wholeheartedly intended deeds, even though they were not carried out fittingly.[143]

"This living being is tasked with the supervision of prayers, because all the requests besought by people in their prayers are held in the hand of this living being, who deposits them in this hall. These requests remain in this hall for up to forty days for safekeeping. For at the end of forty days (every forty days), this living being goes forth and takes all these requests and deposits them before those seventy-two lights who adjudicate them, whereupon this spirit called *Zekhut'el* [252b] examines them: whether he is worthy or not. If he is worthy, the prayer emerges and this

request revolves—twelve deputies issuing with it—each and every one demanding of that spirit the actualization of that request that is fulfilled thereby.[144]

"Beneath this living being are four flaming *seraphim*. The four flaming *seraphim*: שרפאל (*Seraph'el*), ברקיאל (*Baraqi'el*), קרישיאל (*Qarishi'el*), קדומיה (*Qedumyah*). These four beneath this living being are [stationed] to four sides (these four are positioned to the four directions of the world)—and are ordained to look upon all those who observe the Sabbath day, delighting the Sabbath fittingly.[145]

"When these four move, sparks of fire flash forth; and from these sparks, seventy-two *galgalim*, spheres, flaming with fire are fashioned. From here the River of Fire is formed, a thousand thousands ministering the fire. All those who delight the Sabbath—these four princes watch over all those who delight the Sabbath, the living being poised above them, propelled by it beneath.[146]

"Every single day, that River of Fire flows—burning countless spirits and numerous rulers. When Sabbath enters, a herald goes forth; and the River of Fire subsides; and tempests and sparks and flashes abate; and this living being advances—mounting these four *seraphim* we have mentioned—and enters within the middle of this hall. This site is called ענג (*Oneg*), Delight.[147]

"For when Sabbath enters, all the tables of the world's inhabitants—of those who are called 'members of the royal palace'—are arrayed there in this site. A thousand thousands and myriad of myriads arise, presiding over those tables. This supernal living being enters this site upon those four *seraphim* and beholds all those tables, and all those standing by them—inspecting each and every one, how they delight every single table—and arises and blesses that table. All those thousand thousands and myriad of myriads open, reciting 'Amen.'[148]

"What is the blessing with which he blesses that table fittingly arrayed and delighted? *Then you will delight upon*

YHVH; and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob—for the mouth of YHVH has spoken (Isaiah 58:14); and all recite: *Then, when you call, YHVH will answer; when you cry, He will say: Here I am* (ibid., 9). At the final third meal, when that table has been delighted with all the meals, the supreme spirit called *EI* concludes, adding to all the preceding: *Then your light will burst through like the dawn, and your healing quickly sprout. Your vindicator will march before you; the glory of YHVH will be your rear guard* (ibid., 8). All those seventy other lights open on all sides, saying, *Behold, surely so will the man who reveres YHVH be blessed* (Psalms 128:4).[149]

"When a person's table is not found in that site delightfully arranged as is fitting, this living being and those four beneath it—as well as those thousand thousands and myriad of myriads—all thrust him aside to the Other Side; and all the various wardens of judgment seize him and usher him into that site—which is the inverse of this, called נגע (*Nega*), Plague. When they usher him in there, they all open, saying, *He loved cursing—may it come upon him! He did not want blessing—may it be far from him!* (Psalms 109:17); *May the creditor seize all that he has and may strangers plunder his wealth. May no one extend to him kindness*... (ibid., 11–12). May the Compassionate One save us![150]

"Because this constitutes the delight of the blessed Holy One and faith! All these Sabbath, holiday, and festival tables of delight are the joy of the blessed Holy One. Consequently, all those who celebrate the delight of Sabbath, holidays, and festivals—these four positioned beneath this living being station themselves in front of that River of Fire and do not allow all those who celebrate their delights to be burned.[151]

"Beneath these four are other deputies stationed without, manifestly from the side of this hall, all of them

heralds outside; and they proclaim all the judgments and all the decrees issued in this hall.[152]

"Everything is judged here except for three matters—children, life, and sustenance—because authority was not granted here in this hall called Merit. These three do not pertain here, for they depend on מזלא (*mazzala*), flux of destiny—on the flowing, gushing river where life from above depends, where sustenance depends, where children depend. All derive from there—flowing and extending below. Accordingly, everything depends on this hall, except for these three.[153]

"When a person is on his sickbed [253a]—if he is adjudicated for life, it is not that life depends here, but rather, once he is adjudicated here for life, then life flows from above and is granted him. If not, it is not granted. Happy is the share of the righteous, who know the ways of Torah—attaining thereby eternal life! Of them is written *Your people, all of them righteous, will inherit the land forever* (Isaiah 60:21).[154]

"Fifth hall. This hall abides to illumine those below; this is the hall that is poised to illuminate in mystery of faith.[155]

"One opening is found in this hall, one prince above it; this prince is called סניגוריה (*Saneigoryah*). This prince presides over this opening in order to advocate for Israel; for this reason he is so named—for he is appointed over all of Israel's virtues, to raise their defense before their Lord, so that the Other Side will not prevail upon them.[156]

"In this hall presides one spirit composed of four, for this spirit comprises four colors: white, black, green, and red. This is the spirit that abides composed of all, called סוריה (*Suryah*), chief over all lower legions. All of them are stationed beneath him, ordained under his charge.[157]

"This is the spirit that opens and closes; all supernal keys were entrusted to him. Three times a day, all the lower legions incorporate and abide beneath him; from him they

are nourished. This one presides over all the mysteries of his Lord; all supernal treasures were transmitted to him.[158]

"This spirit is called Love; accordingly this hall is called the Hall of Love, for here is concealed every mystery of mysteries for one who is worthy of cleaving to it. Here is the mystery of what is written: *There I will give you my love* (Song of Songs 7:13).[159]

"This spirit guards all the protection on high—and is called *Guardian of Israel* (Psalms 121:4), *Guardian of the Covenant* (Deuteronomy 7:9), for here pertains the protection of all supernal treasures; therefore the treasures of his Lord are concealed within him. From this one emanate paths and ways to those below, so as to rouse spirit among them.[160]

"These four colors within him blend together; wishing to combine, they strike one another; and from all of them emerges a holy living being called זהר (*Zohar*), Radiance. Of this living being is written *that is the living being that I saw by the river Kevar* (Ezekiel 10:15).[161]

"From this hall issue all holy רוחין (*ruḥin*), spirits, actualized by the animating vitality of supernal kisses. For from those kisses, air of spirit flows forth for the vitality of נפשא (*nafsha*), soul, for all those נשמתין (*nishmatin*), soul-breaths, bestowed in human beings—mystery of what is written: *but on everything emanating from YHVH's mouth does the human live* (Deuteronomy 8:3). For in this hall, since the day the world was created, await all the soul-breaths and all the bodies destined to descend to human beings. So this hall receives all those soul-breaths that issue from that flowing, gushing river; accordingly this hall never stands empty.[162]

"Since the day the Temple was destroyed, no other soul-breaths have entered here. When these will be depleted, the hall will not stand empty and will be tended to from on high. Then King Messiah will arrive, arousing this hall above, and the hall below will arouse.[163]

“Concerning the mystery of this hall is written *Your two* שדיך (*shadayikh*), *breasts, are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle* (Song of Songs 4:5). For in this hall, that spirit we have mentioned and that living being generate two lights—embracing one another, interconnected—called אל שדי (*El Shaddai*). These ones called *Shaddai* and *El* below join with one another and merge together and are called *El Shaddai*, because they emerged from the totality of these breasts.[164]

“This *El* conveys from this site all the compassion poised to nourish the hall below called *Zekhut*—named after that spirit, as we have said. This *Shaddai* suckles all those below and all those halls, as well as all those outside stationed on this side, called *Pegs of the Dwelling* (Exodus 35:18, 38:31), as we have established. So it is called *Shaddai*, for it supplies sustenance to all those below, just as it receives from the right.[165]

“From here emanate those lights called *the flame of the ever-turning sword* (Genesis 3:24), because they turn various shades. We have already established that these arouse judgment on missions in the world, and they are [253b] from the left side.[166]

“When this spirit branches out—striking to scatter lights in all directions, just like those breasts that fling milk to every side—so too [lights] from this spirit scatter to all sides, producing another living being empowered over those called *the flame of the ever-turning sword*.[167]

“This one is called [שבע (*Sova*), Abundance,] appointed over the world when famine rules the world and it is judged thereby. Then this living being is ordained over the world and brings forth a spirit of sustenance for all the scions of faith, so that they will not perish in the famine—sustaining their heart. For when famine prevails in the world, two impure spirits discharge from the Other Side, called שוד (*Shod*), Plunder, and כפן (*Kafan*), Famine. This is the mystery: *You will laugh at plunder and famine* (Job 5:22). For these arise in the world and assail human beings; one sends

famine upon them, causing them to die; and the other, that people should eat and not be sated, for the evil spirit prevails in the world.[168]

"This living being emits a single spark, shooting forth from the scintillation of the two sparks we have mentioned that turn various shades. This spark is called *seraphim*, and this [living being] takes hold of them and ignites them.[169]

"In this hall there are two princes—lights presiding over a thousand and myriad of myriads called Vines,' and a thousand and myriad of myriads called 'pomegranates'; all of them abiding in affection. These are they who convey love between Israel below and the blessed Holy One above. All of them arouse love and abide in love. When love is aroused from below above, and from above below, this hall is filled with immense goodness, ever-so-much loving-kindness, and vast compassion. Then love below within higher love, one cleaving to the other.[170]

"From here go forth two princes called Love, named after the hall. These are stationed to look upon all those who enact the unification of their Lord with love, and who lovingly surrender their souls for Him; they ascend and bear witness on high.[171]

"All those who perform חסד (*ḥesed*), loving-kindness, in the world—these deeds of loving-kindness ascend and enter within this hall and are adorned there, ascending to be adorned within Love Supreme. Of this is written *Your ḥesed, love, is higher than heaven* (Psalms 108:5). Of this hall is written *Many waters cannot quench love, nor rivers drown it*... (Song of Songs 8:7).[172]

"Sixth hall. This is the hall called Hall of רצון (*Ratson*), Desire, which is רעוא (*Ra'ava*), Will, called *emanation of YHVH's mouth* (Deuteronomy 8:3)—joy of total cleaving. Here is Will of Wills, in the mystery of what is written: *Your lips are like a crimson thread* (Song of Songs 4:3)—will of all souls issuing from that *emanation of YHVH's mouth*.[173]

“This hall is the Hall of Favor, for here are fulfilled all the requests and all the supplications of the world on account of the Will of all Wills, when kisses inhere through the mystery of what is written: *Jacob kissed Rachel* (Genesis 29:11)—mnemonic. Then, when they kiss one another, it is known as עת רצון (*et ratson*), a time of favor—for then perfection prevails and all faces beam. When prayers ascend, a time of favor prevails; so it is written *As for me, may my prayer come to You, O YHVH, at a time of favor* (Psalms 69:14)—union with one another.[174]

“Six openings are found in this hall—four openings to the four directions of the world, and one above and one below. A spirit is appointed over these openings, named רזיאל (*Razi’el*), chief over all those ordained in all these openings—encharged and entrusted with all those sublime mysteries uttered from mouth to mouth, kissing one another with love of love.[175]

“These gates are not capable of being revealed. When they are opened, then all the halls and all those spirits and all those camps know that the gates of Will are open. Nothing enters through these gates except for the aspirations of prayer, the intentions of praise, and the desires of supernal holy souls.[176]

“This is the hall of Moses; in this hall was Moses gathered in love, kissing kisses. In this hall *Moses would speak, and Elohim would answer him in a voice* (Exodus 19:19) when they cleaved to one another, kisses with kisses [254a]. Of this is written *Oh that he would kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!…* (Song of Songs 1:2). There are no joyful kisses except when they are intoxicated with one another, with all delights and joy from the supernal radiance.[177]

“Come and see: *Moses would speak* (Exodus 19:19)—as is written: *Ah, you are beautiful, my darling* (Song of Songs 1:15, 4:1), and similarly: *Your lips are like a crimson thread* (ibid. 4:3). *And Elohim would answer him in a voice* (Exodus

19:19)—as is written: *Ah, you are beautiful, my beloved, and gentle* (Song of Songs 1:16), and similarly: *his lips lilies, dripping with flowing myrrh* (ibid. 5:13).[178]

"To this spirit have been entrusted all the mysteries of those souls who arouse passionate love above and below as one; those superior souls like Rabbi Akiva and his companions. For these do not draw near to bathe in the site of the River of Fire, where all the other souls bathe and pass, as we have already established.[179]

"Come and see: This spirit emits twelve lights, all of them abiding in the mystery beneath this spirit. At the four sides of the world are stationed four supernal lights, ruling in four directions.[180]

"To the south is stationed one supernal light, the right hand of the whole world, from which Israel began to embrace the mystery of faith—Michael, head of the legion of the supernal light, cascading from the south, where light abides in its potency.[181]

"Michael, the right light, is Israel's grand guardian. For when the Other Side rises to accuse Israel, Michael argues with him, acting as advocate on Israel's behalf, and they are saved from that accuser, archenemy of Israel. Notwithstanding the time when Jerusalem was destroyed; for then sins prevailed, and Michael was unable to contend with the Other Side, Michael's claims on Israel's behalf torn to shreds; and then applied the verse *He has withdrawn His right hand in the face of the enemy* (Lamentations 2:3).[182]

"To the north is stationed another light, poised to receive the judgment from the chamber of the fourth hall and convey it to the prince of the opening. For in that opening loom other princes of the impure side, waiting for that prince, to seize the judgment. Sometimes this light to the north administers the judgment and it is not entrusted to the Other Side, for all judgments administered by him contain healing; the blessed Holy One renders *ḥesed*, kindness, in those cases.[183]

“This light to the north is Gabriel. Wherever he strikes, *ḥesed*, loving-kindness, prevails—for Gabriel comprises two modes, composed of both; so, he contains the blow and the healing. On this side inheres the mystery of what is written: *just as a man chastises his son, YHVH your God chastises you* (Deuteronomy 8:5)—chastenings of love, composed of this side and that.[184]

“To the east is stationed another light appointed over all matters of healing, to usher in before his Lord all those forsaken on their sickbed, and to bring forward the times and ends of those illnesses that have completed their faithful [mission]. Every single day, he circumnavigates the world to accomplish healing at the command of his Lord. This light is named Raphael, even though we have already established him to a different side. This one embraces this side and that side—the side of Michael and the side of Gabriel.[185]

“This one is empowered in the hour when a person is adjudicated for life in the fourth hall, whereupon he hastens healing. This healing manifests with duress, for it hails from two aspects: the duress derives from the left side, and the healing from the right side. So, when healing reaches the ill, it reaches him with great duress.[186]

“Thus he is from the west—and even though we said that Raphael is in the east, and they have established him to the west—healing and life derive solely from the east, because from there they stream below.[187]

“On this side is one light named Nuriel (he is Uriel), composed of all of them, functioning as agent of all. He possesses three aspects—in essence two, for each of these encompasses its companion [254b].[188]

“For these four lower elements derive from the four elements of the world, transcending all. And because all of them interlink, the verse alluded, saying *I descended to the nut garden* (Song of Songs 6:11), as we have established.[189]

“The twelve lights are sustained by the spirit we mentioned; that spirit above them in perfection. These four supernal lights have eight others beneath them, becoming a whole—all of them a single consummation. When they all branch out, they are three to each side.[190]

“These four supports are poised to raise and unite this hall above, in the site called Heaven, joining kisses together as one. Beneath these are countless rungs upon rungs, all of them emanating from them—from these lower elements—some from the aspect of water, some from the aspect of fire, some from the aspect of air, some from the aspect of dust.[191]

“In a similar vein we have learned: Four entered an orchard—and all of them were selected to this realm, to these four elements. Each one was bound to his domain: one to the aspect of fire, one to the aspect of water, one to the aspect of air, one to the aspect of dust. All of them succumbed to their element, just as they entered—aside from the perfectly pious one, who proceeded to the right side and cleaved to the right, ascending on high.[192]

“When he reached the site called the Hall of Love, he cleaved to it passionately. He said, ‘This hall must be conjoined with the hall above, with great love!’ Then he was perfected in the mystery of faith—and ascended and consummated lesser love with great love, as is fitting. So, he died with love, and his soul departed with this verse: *You shall love* (Deuteronomy 6:5). Happy is his share![193]

“As for all the others, each of them descended below and was punished in that element that cascades below.

“Elisha descended below, into the left side—which is fire—descending within, not ascending, and encountered that Other Side, called אל אחר (*el aḥer*), *another god* (Exodus 34:14). *Teshuvah* was denied him; and he was banished because he cleaved to it. So he is called אחר (*Aḥer*), Another, as we have established.[194]

“Ben Azzai descended into the element of dust; and before he reached the burnt dust, which extends to the Other Side, he succumbed to that dust and died. Of this is written *Precious in the eyes of YHVH is the death of His faithful ones* (Psalms 116:15).[195]

“Ben Zoma descended into the element of רוחא (*ruḥa*), air, and encountered another רוחא (*ruḥa*), spirit, extending to the side of impurity. And because another spirit passed by him, נפגע (*nifga*), he went mad. What is *nifga*? The impure spirit called פגע רע (*Pega Ra*), *Evil Disaster* (1 Kings 5:18), and so, *nifga*, he went mad. פגע (*Paga*), He came upon, him; and he did not stabilize.[196]

“None of them escaped punishment. Concerning this, Solomon said: *There is futility befalling earth: there are righteous people treated according to the conduct of the wicked* (Ecclesiastes 8:14)—for these descended among those rungs and were punished![197]

“Come and see: Because Rabbi Akiva ascended on high, as is fitting, he entered in peace and emerged in peace.

“[David] posed a question, not clarified explicitly, as is written: ממתים (*mi-metim*), *from men, by Your hand, O YHVH*; ממתים (*mi-metim*), *from men, from those fleeting of portion in life* (Psalms 17:14). He was bewildered how these were slain among the slain of the world—righteous innocents, who never sinned such that they should be punished. Come and see: ממתים (*mi-metim*), *of them that die, by Your hand, O YHVH*; ממתים (*mi-metim*), *of them that die*, מחלד (*me-ḥeled*), *from those fleeting, of portion in life*. Here are two modes: *by Your hand, O YHVH*, and חלד (*ḥeled*), *fleeting. By Your hand, O YHVH*—the blessed Holy One, for the soul is gathered to Him; *of them that die* מחלד (*me-ḥeled*)—the Other Side, ruling over the body, as is written: *I will never see a human again among the inhabitants of* חדל (*ḥadel*), *the world* (Isaiah 38:11).[198]

“Come and see: The souls of these—for consummation of the Holy Spirit, that there be ten spirits from below, as is

fitting; as for their bodies—surrendered to the wicked kingdom; each one takes its share in accordance with the mystery of the sacrifices.[199]

"Come and see: When the beginning of the head of faith initiated, within thought a spark of impenetrable darkness struck—ascending within thought, firing scintillating sparks, hurling in three hundred and twenty directions, clarifying refuse from within thought, refined.[200]

"So too, following the same paradigm, it ascended in thought. Just as refuse was refined within, so too these were clarified—through whom was consummated the one in need. Surely it ascended in thought thus! All [255a] was as it needed to be: joy on this side, sadness on that.[201]

"It is written: *So I praised enjoyment, for the only good a person can have under the sun is to eat and drink and be merry,* והוא ילונו (*ve-hu yilvennu*), *for this can accompany him, in his toil, through the days of life that God has granted him under the sun* (Ecclesiastes 8:15). *So I praised enjoyment*—does King Solomon really praise this?! Rather, *So I praised enjoyment*—joy of the Holy King, when He rules on Sabbaths and holidays. For of all the good deeds that a person performs *the only good a person can have under the sun is to eat and drink*—exhibiting joy at that time, so that he might have a share in the world that is coming. והוא (*ve-hu*), *For he, can accompany him in his toil*. Who? The blessed Holy One. He will accompany him and will go with him, bringing him into the world that is coming.[202]

"Alternatively, והוא ילונו (*ve-hu yilvennu*), *for he will lend him*. Who is this? The person who eats and drinks and rejoices; everything he spends on food and drink he lends to the blessed Holy One on loan, who repays him double for all his expenses. With these two a person lends to the blessed Holy One: when he takes pity on the poor; and when he spends for Sabbaths and holidays—lending all to the blessed Holy One, as is said: *He who is generous to the poor makes a loan to YHVH; He will repay him his due* (Proverbs 19:17).[203]

“Hence: this is joy, that is sadness; this is life, that is death; this is good, that is evil; this is the Garden of Eden, that is Hell—this the converse of that, entirely! And so: their body in sadness, the soul in joy. When these ten called ‘The Martyrs’ were killed, it was by the Other Side; and another site of holiness was consummated. Accordingly, everything was revealed before the blessed Holy One and transpired fittingly.[204]

“In this hall are found those twelve: four above, and eight with them—for each one takes two along with itself, just like the arrangement of the twelve banners. Likewise the arrangement below, until the end of all rungs.[205]

“From this hall go forth all the prayers and all the aspirations of desire performed lovingly. When they enter within this hall, they all cleave to the blessed Holy One. Every day, whenever kisses unite is the time when the blessed Holy One delights with the souls of the righteous. What is this delight? That they draw near through those kisses; they hasten that bliss. Of this is written *Then you will delight upon YHVH* (Isaiah 58:14), as we have established.[206]

“This hall is the totality of all the lower halls; all of them are comprised within this hall.[207]

“The first hall, where that spirit we mentioned abides as well as all those living beings, is supported by two supports to the east, two supports to the south, two supports to the west, and two supports to the north—they are eight, called ‘Pegs,’ situated without.[208]

“When the supernal King arrives, these pegs move; and they are uprooted from their place—as well as the cords, which are another eight aside from the pegs we mentioned. That first spirit within the hall enters, merging within the second hall, with the second spirit within.[209]

“These two supports to the east are קרעיאל (*Qera’i’el*), ordained—outside—over 12,000 deputies, all of them called ‘Pegs of the Dwelling’; this one is to the right. To the left is

שמעיאל (*Shema’i’el*)—ordained over 12,000 other deputies, all of them Pegs, as we have said.[210]

“As for the other princes, the supports assigned to the south: one is סעדיאל (*Sa’adi’el*), and one is סטריהאל (*Sitreyah’el*)—each one over 12,000 other deputies. These are never relieved of their authority.[211]

“All of these are entrusted with the vitalization of the world. These are they who preside over the verification of those who marry—weighing males and females on scales, one with the other; these are called ‘Scales,’ about which is written *to be weighed on scales* (Psalms 62:10); not those of whom is written *scales of equity* (Leviticus 19:36), as we have said.[212]

“All those who are equivalent to one another, one not weighing more than the other, balance and unite as one—nexus of [255b] male and female together—and so, *to be weighed on scales*; even though sometimes one weighs more than the other and the matter prospers and they unite as one, as we have already established.[213]

“The other princes to the north—two supports—are פתחיאל (*Petaḥi’el*) and עטריאל (*Atari’el*), each one ordained over 12,000 others. These are ‘Pegs of the Dwelling,’ like those others we mentioned.[214]

“Those princes—two other supports to the west—are פדתיאל (*Pedati’el*) and תומיהאל (*Tumyah’el*), each one ordained over 12,000 other deputies, all of them ‘Pegs of the Dwelling,’ as we have noted.[215]

“These are they who shed tears over all those who divorce their first wife, because those seven blessings transmitted to her have departed and were not fulfilled—because she has been divorced, and husband and wife did not cleave as one. So, they all shed tears, [thinking] that divorce indicates the departure of those seven blessings from another place. Then, at that hour, a voice resounds, saying, *Where is your mother’s bill of divorce by which I sent her away?* (Isaiah 50:1).[216]

“The second hall we mentioned, comprising the first hall, uniting with it, and all those living beings—it also has eight supports like the first, all of them ordained, every single one, over 12,000 other deputies like those previous ones we noted; two [supports] to the east, two supports to the south, two supports to the north, and two supports to the west.[217]

“The two supports to the east are יהדניאל (*Yahadani’el*) and גזוריה (*Gezuryah*)—12,000 other deputies for each one, all of them Pegs. The two supports to the south are אהריאל (*Ahari’el*) and ברהיאל (*Barahi’el*)—each one over 12,000, like the preceding.[218]

“These are assigned the birthing-stool, and are called accordingly; and they take women’s groans and set them before this hall. When the Other Side arrives to accuse at that hour—a time of danger—these arise and escort those groans to the prince above the opening; and the Other Side is unable to accuse. Sometimes the Other Side precedes, enters, and accuses—and is able to inflict harm.[219]

“The two supports to the north are חלחליאל (*Ḥalḥali’el*) and קרספיהאל (*Qersafyah’el*)—each ordained over 12,000 others, as we have said. The other two supports to the west are סוגדיה (*Sogadyah*) and גדריה (*Gedaryah*)—over 12,000 others.[220]

“These are assigned the blood of the covenant when the infant is circumcised on the eighth day; they take that blood and place it before this hall. When fury arouses in the world, the blessed Holy One gazes upon that blood, and permission is not granted to the Other Side to enter there.[221]

“Come and see: When a person is circumcised on the eighth day, and Sabbath—holy kingdom—has spread over him, the Other Side arises and sees that the foreskin that is cut and cast away is his share from this offering. Then he is broken, unable to dominate and accuse him, and he ascends and becomes Israel’s advocate before the blessed Holy One.[222]

“Third hall. This hall abides to incorporate and unite the second hall within, as well as that spirit and all those living beings it contains. All of them combine and coalesce together—one spirit, embracing one another. It also has eight supports to the four directions of the world, all of them called Pegs.[223]

“The two supports to the east are יהודיה (*Yehodyah*) and עזריאל (*Azri’el*)—each presiding over 12,000 other deputies, all of them called ‘Pegs of the Dwelling.’ The two supports to the south are שכניאל (*Shekhani’el*) and עזוזיה (*Azuzyah*)—ordained over 12,000 other deputies.[224]

“These are assigned the breath of children studying Torah, sustaining the world. They take that breath and raise it on high; and from every single breath of those children studying Torah, one spirit is fashioned—and that spirit ascends above and is adorned with a holy crown, ordained as guardian of the world. And so with all of them.[225]

“The two supports to the north are עזפיאל (*Azafi’el*) and קטטריהאל (*Qetatreyah’el*)—each one ordained [256a] over 12,000 other deputies, as we have said. The two supports to the west are עססניה (*Asasanyah*) and אדיריריה (*Adiriryah*)—each one ordained over 12,000, as we have said.[226]

“These are assigned to proclaim throughout all the firmaments about all those who withdraw their children from Torah, removing them from study—whereupon all these deputies come forth and proclaim, saying, ‘Woe to so-and-so, who withdrew his child from Torah! Woe to him, for he is forfeit from the share of the world that is coming!’[227]

“Fourth hall. This hall is a hall abiding with exceeding protection. This hall is surrounded by thirty-two supernal pegs, and 500,000 others ordained beneath these; and four others supreme over all—all of them Pegs of this hall. These four are: חסדיהאל (*Ḥasdiyah’el*), קסיריה (*Qasiryah*), קדומיה (*Qedumyah*), דהריאל (*Dahari’el*). These four are in charge of all—all the others ordained beneath them.[228]

“Through these is made known the judgment to be enacted in the world. Of these is written [*This sentence by decree of the watchers*;] שאלתא (*she’elta*), *this verdict, by order of the holy ones* (Daniel 4:14). To these four come all those hosts appointed over judgment לשאלא (*le-sha’ala*), to inquire, how judgment has been decreed in the world, regarding all those judgments not yet handed down as written decrees—for the life of the world. So they all come to inquire, and accordingly they are all ordained over this.[229]

“The thirty-two others are assigned over all those who study Torah constantly, not ceasing day or night. As for all those others beneath them, they are assigned over all those who set aside fixed times for Torah. All of them are assigned over this—as well as to punish all those who are able to engage Torah yet do not.[230]

“Fifth hall. In this hall are stationed 365 deputies, corresponding to the number of days of the year, and above them four supports, supreme above all. They are: קרשיהאל (*Qerashyah’el*), סרטיהאל (*Seratyah’el*), עסיריה (*Asiryah*), קדמיאל (*Qadami’el*). These are called the Pegs of this hall.[231]

“These are assigned to amuse the world when the soul added every Sabbath eve flows forth. When it flows forth, these emerge with it—removing from Israel all sorrow, all weariness, all bitterness of soul, and all fury in the world. These are the jesters of the world.[232]

“All those beneath these four are empowered to remove judgment from those consigned to judgment, and from those tormented in Hell, so that judgment will be withdrawn from them. So, all these pegs abide in joy and issue from joy. Accordingly, all the halls stand poised to be crowned above, as has been said.[233]

“Sixth hall. This hall is the hall poised over all the lower halls; in this, one hundred others are stationed without, called Pegs like the others. They are one hundred to the right, and one hundred others to the left.[234]

“Two supernal princes are to the right, and two other supernal princes to the left. Those on the right are מלכיאל (*Malki’el*) and שמעיהאל (*Shemayah’el*); those on the left are called מסרניה (*Mesasranyah*) and צפצפיה (*Tsaftsafyah*)—these are supernal Pegs, on the right and on the left.[235]

“These stand poised in the world. At the moment when the time comes for a righteous person to depart the world and permission is granted to the Other Side, these four arise, readying themselves there, so that his soul will depart with a kiss—not with great difficulty, afflicted by the dominion of the Other Side. Happy are the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming, for their Lord extends their dominion upon them, to be protected in this world and in the world that is coming![236]

“From this hall all mysteries and all higher and lower rungs begin to unite, so that everything above and below will be in a state of perfection; so that all will be one, a single nexus, to unify the Holy Name fittingly—becoming consummate, illumining supernal flow below, radiance of sparkling lamps as one, not withdrawing from one another. Then streams and flows the one that flows—not known, unrevealed—in order that they will bind [256b] and unite with one another, so that the blessed Holy One will be in perfect unity, as is fitting.[237]

“Happy is the share of one who fathoms the mystery of his Lord, perceiving Him fittingly, eating their share in this world and in the world that is coming! Of this is written *Behold, My servants shall eat, and you shall hunger…* (Isaiah 65:13). Happy are the righteous who know the ways of the blessed Holy One—delving into Torah day and night—for they know how to enact holy unification, as is fitting! For whoever knows how to unify the Holy Name consummately, fittingly, is happy in this world and is happy in the world that is coming![238]

“Concatenation of all these halls—here they interlink. Jacob—nexus of all faith, the spirit poised to receive the spirit that is below; this spirit above poised to receive the supernal spirit in which all spirits inhere. This is Jacob, median spirit of all spirits. He takes this sixth hall through these kisses, to unite spirit with spirit, as is said: *Oh that he would kiss me with the kisses of his mouth* (Song of Songs

1:2)—each kiss fusing spirit with spirit, lower with higher. Through these kisses the spirit below ascends, cleaving to the spirit above. When spirit unites with spirit, then the supreme concealed spirit alights upon this median spirit; but until aroused to unite spirit with spirit, the supreme spirit cannot alight upon the median spirit.[239]

"This is the mystery: When spirit embraces spirit, kisses begin to unite, and other limbs arouse in desire; and this spirit fuses with that. Then all limbs arouse—joining one another, limb with limb.[240]

"Now, you might ask, 'Who arouses? Lower limbs or upper limbs?' Lower limbs always arouse toward upper; the one in darkness always desires to be in the light; the black flame below always arouses toward the white flame above, so as to cleave to it and abide beneath it. This is the mystery: אלהים (*Elohim*), *O God, do not be silent! Do not be mute or quiet, O God!* (Psalms 83:2).[241]

"When Jacob takes this sixth hall, it is then called by a complete holy name. Now, you might say that this is the most complete of all—it is not so. Rather, when all the halls are consummated with one another, then all is called by the complete name: יהוה אלהים (*YHVH Elohim*)—this is the complete name. Until they are joined with one another, halls with halls, they are not called by this complete name. When they join together as one, these with those, all is perfected from above and below—and radiance above, from beyond, descends and settles on all; and everything interlinks together, becoming entirely one.[242]

"Mystery of the matter: Jacob took four wives and incorporated them within, even though we have established this matter through another mystery—that he is poised between two worlds. Mystery of all: When Jacob takes this hall, which is the sixth, he takes and incorporates within all those four wives—four angels—and all of them cleave to this hall. These are the four riverheads, as is written: [*A river issues from Eden to water the garden*,] *and from there it*

divides and becomes four riverheads (Genesis 2:10). These four heads are the four wives. Jacob took them, as we have said, as he was required; and he takes this hall. Then this hall is called ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), And *YHVH*—when it is favorable, as is said: *And YHVH was going before them by day* [*in a pillar of cloud, to guide them on the way*] (Exodus 13:21); *And YHVH said, 'Shall I hide from Abraham* [*what I am about to do?'*] (Genesis 18:17). When Isaac unites with the hall of the law court called Merit, then all is called ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), And *YHVH*—to punish the wicked, as is said: *And YHVH rained on Sodom*… (ibid. 19:24); all is in one mystery, as is fitting.[243]

"When Jacob takes this hall, then all is called רצון שלים (*Ratson Shalim*), Consummate Desire. Your mnemonic: *When the turn came for Esther* (Esther 2:15); and this is עת רצון (*et ratson*), a time of favor. From here on, halls begin connecting with one another, concatenating. And even though we have learned south-east, it is all one. Here pertains spirit with spirit, a single cleaving.[244]

"From here Abraham, the right hand—called Great Love, as we have said—begins, and takes the hall called Love, as mentioned. And because Abraham takes this hall called Love, then שדים (*shadayim*), *breasts, become firm* (Ezekiel 16:7)—filled with all goodness to satiate and nourish all from here. When these *shadayim, breasts, become firm* and are filled from within Love Supreme, then this hall is called אל שדי (*El Shaddai*), as we have noted. With this the whole [257a] world was sustained when it was created; for when the world was created, it could not abide enduringly and was unstable until this hall taken by Abraham was revealed. When Abraham was revealed in this hall, then He said to the world 'די (*Dai*), Enough!'—sufficient for the world to be nourished and endure. For this reason it is called שדי אל (*El Shaddai*)—אל (*El*), God, containing די (*dai*), enough, for all, from which to be nourished and suckle.[245]

"Come and see: In the time to come, the blessed Holy One is destined to fill this hall and embellish it, as is written:

That you will suck and be satisfied from her comforting breasts; that you will drink deeply and delight from the abundance of her glory (Isaiah 66:11). *Her comforting breasts* and *the abundance of her glory*—all in this hall. Then, at that time, this verse will apply: *Who uttered to Abraham: Sarah will suckle children* (Genesis 21:7)—for suckling depends on Abraham.[246]

"Isaac—who is the left of the blessed Holy One, the site from which all judgments in the world arouse, the left arm, beginning of all judgments, where all judgments stir—takes and embraces that hall called Merit, to join judgment with judgment, so that all becomes a single nexus; for this is upper Judgment, impressions of judgments inhering within.[247]

"Here is inscribed the holy name called אלהים (*Elohim*), God. For there is אלהים חיים (*Elohim Ḥayyim*), Living God, which is above, beyond, utterly concealed—and then there is *Elohim* that is Higher Court, and *Elohim* that is Lower Court. This is the significance of what is written: *Yes, there are* אלהים שפטים (*elohim shofetim*), *gods judging, on earth* (Psalms 58:12)—upper *Elohim* comprising those below; and all is one.[248]

"In this hall Isaac arouses and all the seventy-two lights under his aegis—from which are decreed all the judgments in the world below, as is written: *This sentence by decree of* עירין (*irin*), *the watchers* (Daniel 4:14). Why are they called עירין (*irin*)? Well, because all of them are rooted in this עיר (*ir*), city: *city of YHVH of hosts, city of our God* (Psalms 48:9). Each of the halls above is called עיר (*ir*), city, as is said: עיר וקדיש (*ir ve-qaddish*), *holy watcher* (Daniel 4:10, 20); and these are [known as] עירין (*irin*), watchers, for they are found deep within the hall and are sustained by עיר (*ir*), the city; accordingly they are called עירין (*irin*).[249]

"This hall merges with Isaac; but all is in the hall of Abraham, for right encompasses left. Come and see: Each blends with its fellow; and we have already established that when Abraham bound Isaac, it was in order to incorporate

judgment within, so that there should be left included in right, right ruling over left. That is why the blessed Holy One commanded Abraham to offer his son to judgment and to overpower it; not Isaac, but Abraham! So, in consequence: this one in judgment, that one in love; and all is one, this blending with that. Likewise are lower halls merged with higher.[250]

"When Isaac takes this hall, then all is favorable—judgment by merit. So a person rendering judgment must adjudicate judgment by merit—for it is a supernal mystery, perfection of judgment. For there is no perfection of judgment except by merit; this without that is not perfection. Judgment by merit constitutes perfection of faith, as above.[251]

"On the day of Rosh Hashanah, when judgment arouses in the world, Israel below must stimulate compassion from within the shofar—corresponding to the supernal mystery, as we have already established. We must join judgment toward merit; for when judgment abides with merit, all is in a single bond—above and below in perfection. Then, *evil's mouth is stopped* (Job 5:16)—for it is not permitted to accuse and denounce in the world. Then, all is in a single unity, fittingly. Judgment without merit is not judgment![252]

"This is the mystery: Israel possesses judgment by merit, whereas other nations do not possess judgment by merit. For this reason, it is forbidden us to try our cases in the judiciaries of the other nations, for they do not have a share in the side of our faith, as is written: *He has not done* so *for any other nation, and the laws they know not* (Psalms 147:20). From the side of Israel: whoever renders judgment and does not incorporate merit within, sins—for he diminishes mystery of faith and leads himself astray to that side possessing judgment without merit.[253]

"Come and see: When the Sanhedrin below stand in session to adjudicate capital cases, they are required to open with merit, so as to combine merit with judgment.

Furthermore, they are called from the place of merit, and so their endeavor is to open with merit. They begin with merit from the youngest member, and afterward judgment is completed from the most eminent member, so that merit will be contained in judgment—this above, that below. Judgment by merit constitutes perfection of judgment. This without that does not constitute perfection. Hence, Isaac [257b] and Rebecca are as one—this one judgment, that one merit, attaining perfection as one. Happy is the share of Israel, for the blessed Holy One gave them a perfect Torah to walk in the way of truth, as above![254]

"Come and see: They do not render judgment except by merit, examining merit first, to be combined with one another. The Sanhedrin ponder merit in judgment to incorporate all as one, so that the Other Side will not reign; for when merit is not found, the Other Side—called Guilt—looms and joins with judgment and is empowered. This is judgment by guilt.[255]

"So on the day of Rosh Hashanah, we must join merit with judgment, so that guilt will not prevail. Accordingly, merit and judgment must be one, constituting perfection. For when the Other Side reigns, there is no perfection but rather accusation, just as he himself is accusation—the four death penalties. When the side of holiness that is merit reigns, all is perfect: peace and truth, love and compassion.[256]

"When the Other Side joins with judgment—which reigns accusingly through the four death penalties of the court: stoning, burning, beheading, and strangulation—all is dominion of evil accusation. Stoning, for it is *a stone one strikes against* (Isaiah 8:14); burning, for it is *a rock one stumbles over* (ibid.)—hard fire; beheading—*sword devouring flesh* (Deuteronomy 32:42), devouring flesh, precisely, dominating flesh, and this is *end of all flesh* (Genesis 6:13); strangulation, for it is *God's curse* (Deuteronomy 21:23)—the one presiding over strangulation

and crucifixion; and we have already established that it is in order that the flesh alone will remain, and that *God's curse* has dominion over the flesh—dark bile. Hence: one for good, the other for ill.[257]

"Israel, who possess mystery of faith, must be on guard so that the Side of Faith prevails—and not give scope to the Other Side to rule. Happy are they in this world and in the world that is coming! Of them is written *Your people, all of them righteous will inherit the land forever* (Isaiah 60:21).[258]

"The prophets—supernal sides, two thighs supporting holy Torah—take the hall in which inhere two spirits, *Nogah*, Brilliance and *Zohar*, Radiance, two thighs below supporting halls above called Oral Torah. Just as there are supports for Torah that is Written Torah, so there are supports sustaining Torah that is Oral Torah, merging with one another. When these two supports below join with those above, the prophetic mode is inscribed within them. What is this? Vision—resembling prophecy. All the masters of vision imbibe from here. Above—prophecy; here—vision.[259]

"So, one is patterned on the other. When they join together, the holy name called צבאות (*Tseva'ot*), Hosts, reigns over this site, for all the holy hosts are found here—and all of them are called from the prophetic aspect; vision and dream derive from the prophetic mode.[260]

"Even though we have said that this name inheres within the insignia of the holy Covenant because all [hosts] emerge from this sign, nevertheless, the thighs—which are positioned outside—we designate by this name. These are the ones called *baraitot*, externals, for *baraita* is external to Mishnah; our Mishnah is internal to *baraita*; and they are called thighs, outer chambers, corresponding to the supernal pattern.[261]

"Mishnah is mystery abiding within, from where the essence of all is learned; accordingly, the *tanna'im*. This is the mystery: *I would guide you, I would bring you to the house*

of my mother; she would teach me (Song of Songs 8:2). *To the house of my mother*—Chamber of the Holy of Holies; *she would teach me*—mystery of our Mishnah. For when the flowing, gushing river enters the Chamber of the Holy of Holies, then it is written: *she would teach me*. This is the mystery, that [She] is called Mishnah, as is said: את משנה (*et mishneh*), *a copy, of this teaching* (Deuteronomy 17:18). Afterward, when it flows on, it is called *baraita*, external; the two thighs are *baraitot*.[262]

"Mystery of mysteries unable to be revealed—for the mystery has been transmitted to the supremely wise alone! Woe if it is revealed, woe if it is not revealed; for it is a mystery of the supernal mysteries through which the blessed Holy One conducts the world![263]

"The First Temple stood in the days of Solomon, corresponding to the higher world called First House. All enjoyed the Chamber of the Holy of Holies—site where sun united [258a] with moon; and the world existed in a state of perfection. Afterward, sins took effect, and mysteries were withdrawn, and they were cast out from the Chamber of the Holy of Holies. When cast to the thighs, called outer chambers, they remained outside, and they had recourse to *baraitot*.[264]

"Throughout the Second Temple, they were stationed in outer chambers, in the thighs. Some of them returned and dwelled in the Chamber of the Holy of Holies, the Second House. The others remained in *baraita*, outside, among the thighs. [Those who returned] studied from our Mishnah and were guided from Her, and this is the mystery of what is written: *For from Zion will come forth Torah* (Isaiah 2:3, Micah 4:2).[265]

"Afterward, when sins took effect, the dominion of this Second House withdrew, even though its reign was not like the First Temple, which was marked by peace. First Temple—realm marked by constant peace on account of the King who possesses peace constantly; and so it was in peace. The

Second Temple did not enjoy such peace, because Foreskin was within and harassed it constantly; accordingly, the priests were constantly poised against it, to counter this Foreskin. To them the matter devolved, to contest it and protect the Second House; all within mystery, fittingly.[266]

"Afterward, sins took effect, and that Foreskin prevailed, and they were cast out from the Second House; and they descended from there to the curves of the thighs; and afterward they descended from there and were cast from those curves down low, finally settling below at the feet. While they are sitting at the feet—then: *On that day His feet will stand* (Zechariah 14:4) and the world will be conducted entirely through supernal mystery, as is fitting. Even though they were cast out, they did not abandon Him, and always clung to Him.[267]

"Whoever knows and appraises with the gauge of the measuring line the length of the continuum of the thighs to the feet can ascertain the duration of the prolonged exile. It is a mystery among the Reapers of the Field; all in supernal mystery![268]

"Accordingly, all the *baraitot*, all the *tanna'im*, and all the *amora'im* abide in their proper places, these within, these without—in the curves of the thighs, and those without—beneath the knees. Oral Torah is read with them all; and Israel were exiled to and descended among all of them.[269]

"When the exile will end at the extent of the feet, then *On that day His feet will stand* (Zechariah 14:4), and that impure spirit—Foreskin—will be eliminated from the world, and Israel will resume dominion alone, as is fitting. For until now, that Foreskin cast them down below; but from here on, that Foreskin will be excised and eliminated from the world. Then *Israel will dwell securely; alone* עין יעקב (*ein ya'aqov*), *the abode of Jacob* (Deuteronomy 33:28)—through that *ein ya'aqov, fountain of Jacob*, with no accuser looming against them. Happy is the share of Israel in this world and in the world that is coming![270]

“Joseph the Righteous, pillar of the world, takes into his authority the hidden and concealed hall; and by his authority the seventh hall abides. And even though we have said that it is the hall of Sapphire Pavement that abides by his authority, this is so; by him is it arrayed.[271]

“But come and see: When the prophets we have mentioned join below, two rungs branch out from them: vision and dream—situated in the thighs. In the curves inheres vision, and that which is called minor prophecy; from the thighs below inheres dream; until feet reach feet, where the lowest hall called Sapphire Pavement stands. All thighs in thighs—to be consummated by one another, all of them prophetic rungs; for from there do they emerge, settling on this site—becoming vision, settling on that site—becoming dream.[272]

“Joseph the Righteous is fullness of all. He takes all because all is arrayed by him. All yearn with desire for his sake.[273]

“Come and see: When Joseph the Righteous stands poised to array all he takes all; and when he unites with his hall all are aroused to take up yearning and desire, above and below. All are in a single desire and single perfection that above and below might constitute a single will, as is fitting; and all below abide enduringly because of him. Of this is written *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25)—on this foundation this world depends.[274]

“This Sapphire Pavement is not firmly erected until Joseph the Righteous is primed. When he is primed all are primed. This is the foundation of the entire בנייא (*binyana*), construction. So it is written: ויבן יהוה אלהים (*Va-yiven YHVH Elohim*), *YHVH Elohim constructed, the side* (Genesis 2:22), and not ‘formed,’ or ‘created,’ because this depends on the foundation. After the foundation is arrayed all is constructed [258b] upon it. Hence, all depend on this, as we have established.[275]

“Come and see: It is written: *YHVH Elohim constructed the side*—She was on the rear side and He arrayed Her, transforming face-to-face. So we have established. But: ויבן (*Va-yiven*)—He contemplated, raising Her to that rung in which the higher world abides, that one might resemble the other. *Va-yiven*—He contemplated His sides and arrayed and attuned all Her directions—to sow, water, and engender, to perform through Her all His needs, as required. Afterward: *He brought her* (Genesis 2:22). How? With this Righteous One, as is written: ובזה (*U-va-zeh*), *With this, the maiden would go to the king* (Esther 2:13)—for this one draws all, to ascend and be adorned with perfection.[276]

“Here pertains abstinence from all sins; here, abstinence from all evil desires, which is not the case in the sixth hall in the Other Side—there, all wicked delights and every kind of lust for the pleasure of this world. When this world is guided by them, human beings stumble in them; and because people stray with them, they fail that world thereby—for they see countless carnal pleasures and desires in which the body revels and delights, and they stray after them. This is the significance of what is written: *The woman saw that the tree was good for eating…* (Genesis 3:6)—for all worldly desires and pleasures hang within.[277]

“So, in a similar vein, there are things that the body enjoys—permeating the body and not the soul—and there are things that the soul enjoys and not the body. Accordingly rungs diverge from one another. Happy are the righteous who take the straight path—restraining themselves from that side, cleaving to the Side of Holiness![278]

“This hall comprises all the other names of all those hosts below. Two names contain the other names. One: When above unites with below and Jacob takes His hall through those kisses in supernal mystery, then it contains all the other names—and it is called יהוה אלהים (*YHVH Elohim*).

This is called a complete name, as we have established. The other: When Foundation of the World unites with its hall and all arouse in love and longing toward it, all absorbed within, then it contains all the other names—and it is called יהוה צבאות (*YHVH Tseva'ot*). This is called a consummate holy name—though not as complete as the other one.[279]

"What distinguishes the two? One presides over upper with lower, body with body, as we have said; the other presides from the site of consummation of the body below over these halls and all that is beneath. This is the mystery of the First Temple and the Second Temple. Therefore this hall contains all the names below, as we have established. So, these names: one ascends, the other descends. Happy are the righteous who know the ways of Torah![280]

"This Foundation is deployed in two modes: one—to array all the others below; the other—to array the seventh hall; arraying one another so that all becomes a single desire, as is fitting. Thus far: the union of two modes—above and below—uniting as one completely, to follow the straight path.[281]

"Happy is one who knows how to enact unification and to sequence the arrangements of faith to follow the straight path! Happy is he in this world and in the world that is coming! Of this is written *Kindness and truth have met, justice and peace have kissed* (Psalms 85:11). Then: *Truth will sprout from the earth as justice looks down from heaven. YHVH will indeed grant bounty and our land will grant its yield* (ibid., 12–13).[282]

"Seventh hall. This hall is the innermost hall of all. In this hall no actual image within, no body at all; here is the concealed of concealed within mystery of mysteries. This is the mystery: the site in which to infuse, through those channels above, the spirit of all spirits, the will of all wills—joining all as one, the spirit of life within, so that all becomes a unified array.[283]

“This hall is called Chamber of the Holy of Holies—site to receive that supreme soul called thus, to draw the world that is coming toward itself. This world is called עולם (*Olam*). *Olam*—ascent; for the lower world ascends toward the higher world, hiding within, ואתעלם (*ve-it’allam*), disappearing, revealed in hiding. *Olam*—for it ascends with all those [259a] close to it, hiding within supernal concealment. עולם עלאה (*Olam Illa’ah*), Higher World, ascends and is hidden in supernal will, within the secrecy of all secrecy—not known at all, unrevealed, unknown to anyone.[284]

“A drawn curtain is spread, shielding, within the secrecy of the concealed. The purging cover is spread within supernal radiancies, sealing the concealment of this hidden secrecy. Inside the purging cover is a concealed, hidden, and secret place gathering within supernal anointing oil—the spirit of life—conveyed by the flowing, gushing river. This river is called ‘spring of the well’ for its waters never cease.[285]

“When it enters, gushing all that holy oil from above—from the site of the Holy of Holies—radiance descends and proceeds through those channels. This one is filled from there, like a female impregnated and filled by a male. Likewise this hall is always configured to receive, like a female receiving from a male.[286]

“The infusion it receives: all those holy spirits and souls that descend to the world and are delayed there for all the prescribed time. They are delayed until King Messiah will arrive, when all those souls will be provided for and will appear, and the world will rejoice as before—whereupon the blessed Holy One will rejoice in His works, as is said: *YHVH will rejoice in His works* (Psalms 104:31).[287]

“In this hall are found the pleasures and luxuries of the spirits, and the delight delighted by the blessed Holy One in the Garden of Eden. Here is the desire of all, bliss of all—joining all as one so that all becomes one bond, all abiding here in a single unity.[288]

“For when all the limbs conjoin with higher limbs, each one as is fitting, their only desire and their only bliss is the unity of this hall; all hinges here. When the conjoining here is unified in a single unity, then every radiant limb and every radiant face and every joy illumines and rejoices.[289]

“Happy is the share of one who knows to sequence arrangements, to align configurations of perfection, and to enact unification fittingly! He is beloved above and beloved below! The blessed Holy One seeks his glory in this world and in the world that is coming, as we have established. Then, all judgments and all evil decrees are removed and abolished from the world.[290]

“This hall is the hall of passion, the hall of bliss, the hall in which above and below delight as one—receiving all the radiance of the supernal lamp illumining all, unifying all as is fitting, in complete unity. So, this hall abides in utter concealment, completely hidden. Come and see: Even though all of them are concealed, this one is the most concealed and hidden—so that sealed covenant becomes entirely one, male and female becoming consummate.[291]

“This hall is called *ark of the covenant* (Joshua 3:11), who is *Lord of all the earth* (ibid.), for this is the site from which flow forth all the souls of the world—to enact unification below, drawing the glory of the blessed Holy One from above below—to be bestowed upon the righteous; for they issue from צדיק (*Tsaddiq*), Righteous One, and enter צדיק (*tsaddiq*), the righteous. Afterward, they depart from the righteous and enter the site from whence they issued.[292]

“This *ark of the covenant* receives all from Righteous One. Afterward, they flow forth from there and enter the righteous below. Afterward, they depart from the righteous below and enter this *ark of the covenant*, so that all souls embrace above and below, to be complete on all sides. In two respects *ark of the covenant* receives souls from צדיק (*tsaddiq*), the Righteous.[293]

“Come and see: The spring of the well never withdraws from the well—and so this site is the consummation of all, vitality of the whole body, to be entirely perfect, as is fitting. Here is unification and concatenation as one, so that above and below become one in a single bond, all limbs not separating from one another, so that everything should be face-to-face.[294]

“So, we have learned: Whoever engages in intercourse from behind impairs the arrangement of gazing face-to-face—illumining all as one, so that everything should be face-to-face, cleaving fittingly, as is said: *and cleaves to his wife* (Genesis 2:24)—to his wife precisely, and not behind his wife![295]

“They are two: Jacob above, Joseph below. They are two desires: one, the sixth hall; the other, this seventh hall. Desire above through those kisses that Jacob takes; desire below through this intercourse that Joseph takes. From these two aspects *ark of the covenant* [259b] receives the spirit of life. From the aspect of Jacob it receives the spirit of life on high, which attaches to him through those kisses—infusing the spirit of life on high within, for sustenance. From the aspect of Joseph, who is below, at the consummation of the body, it receives in this hall spirits and souls to pour forth below into this world.[296]

“These two aspects branch into two modes. The aspect of Jacob expands, bestowing potent flow to those breasts that are filled from the spirit of life, suckling those holy angels who live and endure forever, abiding enduringly thereby. The aspect of Joseph enters with desire, bestowing potency within, fashioning souls and spirits to descend below, to sustain the world’s inhabitants.[297]

“So, these two aspects abide: one above, the other below—one to nourish above, the other to sustain below—each one as is fitting; and so all is one, a single mystery. Even so, Joseph nourishes the entire body and waters it; for this spirit of life [generated] through Jacob’s cleaving

descends below, and this *ark of the covenant* cleaves to it with supernal delight; and that spirit of life descends below through Joseph's cleaving. When everything unites as one, those breasts are filled to suckle all—and consequently all is one.[298]

"Happy is the share of one who knows to bind bonds, actualizing unification with aspiration of the heart, as is fitting, in order to conjoin limb with limb, spirit with spirit, all in one entirety—so that all becomes one, fittingly!

"Come and see: When these holy spirits and all those chariots unite as one in this hall, manifesting in a single concatenation, then this highest spirit of all—a single point—is concealed within them, unrevealed, becoming an utterly concealed spirit, corresponding to the pattern above. Your mnemonic: the nut; unification through the concatenation of all, as we have said, interconnecting, so that all becomes complete in perfection, male and female as one.[299]

"We have already established that sacrifice follows this pattern—ascending to effect unification, each one provided for as is fitting from the rising smoke. Through the priest (who is the right) with the nexus of unity of devotion, and through the Levites with song, one fuses with the other—hall with hall, spirit with spirit—until limb conjoins with limb in their place, so that all merges as one, fittingly.[300]

"We have already established that when all is perfected as one—upper limbs in lower—the supreme soul of all arouses, suffusing all, illumining all, and all are blessed, above and below. That which is unknown, beyond calculation—Will forever ungrasped […]. Then all ascends unto Infinity, and all is bound in a single concatenation, and that Will secretly sweetens deep within.[301]

"Radiance of supreme soul ascends deep within, illumining all. Within this radiance enters concealment of Thought, containing all. Deeper within in Will of Thought it shines and is sweetened—grasping, not grasping. This Will

of Thought ascends to grasp; and when it ascends, radiance below grasps.[302]

"So, everything must concatenate and be filled and blessed entirely as one, fittingly. Then they interlink with one another, as we have said: halls with halls, lower with higher, mystery of male and female as one; supreme radiance with a radiance yet more hidden and concealed within; and that which is concealed comprising that which is even more concealed—until all is embedded fittingly in a single unity.[303]

"Accordingly, Moses knew to sequence the arrangement of his Lord more than all the world's inhabitants. When he needed to prolong, he prolonged; and when he needed to shorten, he shortened—as we have established: *God, pray, heal her, pray!* (Numbers 12:13).[304]

"We have learned: Whoever prolongs his prayer and speculates on it will eventually suffer heartache. And we have learned: Whoever prolongs his prayer has his days prolonged. Mystery of the matter: Whoever prolongs in a site where one should shorten suffers heartache. Who is heart? That which is written: *A good-hearted person has a continuous feast* (Proverbs 15:15), for it is a site in which one must shorten—and not prolong. For look, everything is ready above, and one must not draw it out, but rather bind it with the bond of above, without prolonging, so all becomes [260a] one in a single unity. Since it is bound as one, there is no need to prolong at length and plead supplications. But when one prolongs at length in a site that so requires it, the blessed Holy One receives his prayer; and this constitutes the glory of the blessed Holy One—for the unification of prayer binds bonds, multiplying blessings above and below.[305]

"Within this hall abides a single concealed point; and this point is spirit to receive spirit. When spirit alights upon spirit, they commingle—becoming one, a single cleaving, combining with one another to become one, like a tree

grafted onto another—becoming one, kind with kind. Woe to one who combines kind with not kind, like the sons of Aaron who sought to combine a tree with another not of its kind![306]

"Whoever ארכיב (*arkiv*), combines, kind with its kind and knows how to bind bond with its bond—hall with its hall, rung with its rung—has a share in the world that is coming, as we have established. So, this is the consummation of all; and when this is perfected by that, entirely one, the work that emerges from this consummation is called מעשה מרכבה (*Ma'aseh Merkavah*), The Work of Combination.[307]

"This is the mystery of *YHVH Elohim formed the human* (Genesis 2:7)—the complete name; and the human is the work of this combination combined together—work of utter perfection. When one is consummated by the other, then: *YHVH Elohim*—the complete name. Happy is one who knows to bind bonds of faith—enacting unification as is fitting![308]

"Come and see: Just as there are supernal holy names that join with one another, so is the Holy Name—ramifying above, ramifying below. This name is above; this name is in the center; this name is below. *YHVH*—mystery of the Holy Name is one. Mystery of all: Upper world—through the secrecy of obscurity upon it, partnering with it, becoming one. Lower world—through the secrecy of the center, mystery of the supernal holy chariot upon it, as we have established.[309]

"From this side emanate four chariots, and from that side emanate four chariots—for each one branches into four. Each chariot is four when rungs are contemplated. Likewise all of them are four by four, through the mystery of the holy name—until rungs extend below to the site called by the mystery of the holy name אדני (*Adonai*), to those chariots that are sustained and move by this name; they are called *mountains of bronze* (Zechariah 6:1). For there are mountains and then there are mountains! There are higher

mountains and lower mountains, and they are stationed to three sides—emerging from gold, silver, and bronze.[310]

"Bronze below—on account of those chariots emanating from אלף דלת נון יוד (*alef, dalet, nun, yod*) [אדוני (*Adonai*)] within the first hall, which are the four chariots emanating from those two spirits, right and left, in Sapphire Pavement, as we have said; those two spirits we have mentioned there are called two mountains, and they are *mountains of bronze*.[311]

"From these two spirits called *mountains of bronze* emanate those four chariots that wield that name of אלף דלת (*alef, dalet*), embedded in Sandalfon, Prince of the Countenance—all of them emissaries in the world, these above those—in the mystery of horses and chariots, for there is a chariot driven by horses.[312]

"This holy name combines with יוד הא (*yod, he*), as we have established, that אלף דלת (*alef, dalet*) blends with יוד הא (*yod, he*), generating יאהדונהי (*YAHDVNHY*); this has been explained. אלהים (*Elohim*) does not combine with another name, because there is אלהים חיים (*Elohim Ḥayyim*), Living God—and from this it expands into numerous facets, not gathering in, but expanding.[313]

"The name comprising all names: יוד הא ואו הא (*yod, he, vav, he*)—through the mystery of the permutation of letters of the holy name, which the priest knew to permute in all its aspects, until names attained in numerous modes, in forty-two shades, through the extension of the spark of impenetrable darkness. This one comprises all names.[314]

"This name comprises all the names—mnemonic: אהיולדינם (*AHYVLDYNM*). In these letters are comprised the others that combine; some going out, some coming in.[315]

"Afterward, when the spark of impenetrable darkness spreads and expands, letters combine within—letters entering, letters departing—in the mystery of these nine letters. These have been transmitted to the holy ones of the Most High, [260b] to follow the path of the mystery of

letters, permuting the unification of the names, just as the priest knew to permute names through letters inscribed.[316]

"*Human hands were under their wings* (Ezekiel 1:8). We have already established [the mystery] of all these human hands—that those spirits, living beings, and *ophanim* have wings, and hands under their wings, to receive prayers and to accept penitents. *Human hands*—places and sites to receive human beings with their prayers and supplications, to open openings to accept them, to unite and bind bonds, to fulfill their will.[317]

"These places and sites called *human hands*—which stand in waiting for human beings—are the holy names presiding over every single rung, by which human beings enter through all supernal gates in their prayers and supplications. By virtue of this, lower beings prevail above. This is the mystery of *Your hands made me and set me firm* (Psalms 119:73)—mysteries of the holy names.[318]

"*YHVH said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the heavens'* (Exodus 9:22). How could he raise his hand over the heavens?! Rather, נטה (*neteh*), *stretch*—lower, as is said: ויט (*Va-yet*), *He bent, the heavens and came down* (Psalms 18:10); flow, from above below. *Your hand*—your place, the site of your rung, in which you inhere; and this through the mystery of the holy name. All above and below move and abide by the mysteries of the names; and through them, human beings enter supernal halls—knocking on all supernal gates, with no one hindering them. Happy are they who know to arrange the unification of their Lord as is fitting, to walk the path of truth, so as not to err in the mystery of faith![319]

"Come and see: In these halls is a supernal mystery within faith. All the living beings and chariots משנין (*meshanyan*), differ, from one another, integrating with one another לטב (*le-tav*), beneficently, to be configured. Your mnemonic: וישנה (*va-yeshanneha*), *and he distinguished her, and her maids* לטוב (*le-tov*), *with special kindness* (Esther

2:9). In these seven halls is perfection of above—when they are consummated by one another, and the prayers and supplications of the one who knows to sequence and configure them above enter, as is said: *and the seven maids chosen for her from the king's palace* (ibid.).[320]

"First hall. 'Who forms light and creates darkness…'—radiance of precious stone; sapphirine radiance of precious stone sparkling on two sides, as we have established, to the right and to the left, light and darkness. *How manifold are Your works, O YHVH! All of them You have made in wisdom* (Psalms 104:24)—all the *ophanim* and *galgalim*; *the earth is full of Your creatures*… (ibid.). 'The King exalted alone מאז (*me-az*), from of old'—the holy name יאהדונהי (*YAHDVNHY*), totality of the holy name complete in two names, ascending in the air, '… upraised since ancient days.'[321]

"Second hall. 'Blessed God, who is great in knowledge…'—אורפניאל (*Orpeni'el*); mystery comprising the small letters of the alphabet. Here are they who recite '*Holy*' and '*Blessed*'; here pertains the *Qedushah* and '*Blessed be the glory of YHVH*.'[322]

"Third hall. 'To the blessed God they shall offer sweet melodies.…'[323]

"Fourth hall. 'Who renews in His goodness daily, perpetually, the work of creation…'—for here revolve lights and judgments of the world. Whoever is for life is renewed as before, abiding in the world in the light of the right—called אל (*El*), God, as we have said.[324]

"Fifth hall. This hall is called *Eternal Love*; and this is the flow of love from the hall called Love. This is 'With eternal love You have loved us *YHVH*, our God.… Blessed are You, *YHVH*, who chooses His people Israel with love'—in the mystery of *El Shaddai*.[325]

"Sixth hall. 'True and firm and established and enduring…'; and we must not interrupt between these halls, for they unite as one through the flow of prayer and

desire—interlinking through the mystery of the holy names presiding over each one.[326]

"Seventh hall. Mystery of mysteries: in a whisper, voice unheard. Here pertains aspiration of the heart, to direct and elevate desire above, unto Infinity; to bind seventh with seventh, one with the other entirely, this with that, from below above, and subsequently from above below, extending blessings throughout all as is fitting, from the source of life—the seventh above, the beginning—through aspiration of the heart and through the secrecy of the letters of the seven supernal holy names.[327] [261a]

"The seventh hall—the source of life—is the first hall, beginning of all from above below, receiving the seventh from below, joining with one another—seventh in seventh; for from this one below enters whoever enters the supernal hall.[328]

"'ברוך (*Barukh*), Blessed'—enhancement of all those below, totality of living beings, *seraphim, ophanim*, as well as all the halls; enhancement of the mystery of the Holy of Holies, abiding within, secretly. Then it is called 'Blessed'—with all these enhancements, blessings, and mysteries consummated within.[329]

"'אתה (*Attah*), You'—crowning of concealed letters, totality of all twenty-two letters; this is את (*alef tav*). ה (*He*)—for this ה (*he*) comprises them from above, gathering them within Her. This is the significance of את ה (*alef tav, he*). When She is in consummation with that river that unites with Her, She ascends to be crowned above. This is the mystery of what is written: ובזה (*U-va-zeh*), *With this, the maiden would go to the king* (Esther 2:13). Then: את כל (*et kol*), *all, she asked for would be given her* (ibid.). This is the mystery of 'ברוך אתה (*barukh attah*), Blessed are You,' and one must focus on this, binding will to this mystery.[330]

"'YHVH, our God'—binding of the supernal King above through this, when *the maiden would go to the king all she asked for would be given her*.[331]

“This is the mystery of the fathers—to bless Her; and this is the mystery of ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ Just as this maiden does not abandon those below, so too She never abandons the fathers; and She holds fast to them to protect them. And in order that each one of them will be blessed by Her, She must be invoked for every single one. Afterward, all of them gather in a single bond and are crowned with Her.[332]

“‘The great, mighty, and awesome God’—all as one, to ascend above; at first from above below, now from below above—including them within Her. For as soon as one says ‘The great, mighty, and awesome God,’ all of them are comprised within Her. Then: ‘The supreme God, who bestows beneficent kindness…’—totality of all.[333]

“For they linger with Her and enter Her womb where they are blessed. Afterward, once they are blessed within Her, She releases them and discharges them. At the prostration accompanying ‘Blessed are You, *YHVH*, shield of Abraham,’ all of them emerge here; and through this consummation of the right, all of them are blessed as is fitting.[334]

“Come and see: This seventh hall is a mystery of the supernal King, in which fathers are crowned—as we have said—enveloped within. Until now enveloped, but this hall needs to discharge them. When it sends them forth blessed for the sake of this maiden, She embraces them with all those blessings. And even though halls have already fused with halls, now they unite as one through those blessings; and when one says ‘O King, helper, and savior, and shield,’ it releases them blessed.[335]

“This is the seventh hall, in the mystery of the supernal holy name בוכו (*Buku*)—ברכה וחסד כח ומשפט (*berakhah va-ḥesed koaḥ u-mishpat*), blessing and loving-kindness, power and justice—comprising all. This is the mystery of אהיה (*Ehyeh*)—totality of all, for these letters engender these, from which emerges

totality of the fathers and that which joins with them, which is called blessing.[336]

"As soon as one says 'Blessed are You, *YHVH*, shield of Abraham,' She embraces blessings from them, through the mystery of the fifth hall—Love, which is the right hand, the fifth—binding lovingly with the blessings of the right.[337]

"So must they be blessed—from above below. At first, hall arrays with hall, as we have said; and now, they receive blessings such that these precede those. And even though there is one who attains first—since blessings manifest from the right side, they begin embracing in the fifth hall.[338]

"On the left, with this mystery: 'אתה גבור (*Attah gibbor*), You are mighty…'—union of You and mighty, two judgments. Since blessings extend, it [*Gevurah*] blends with mercy; and all abides as one on that side: 'revives the dead, supports the fallen, and heals the sick.…'[339]

"This is through the mystery of the holy name called אכדטם (*Akdtm*)—mystery in the letters of the supernal name called אלהים (*Elohim*); because these letters ascend to be crowned above, generating those to be called thereby. They ascend to be crowned above—אלהים חיים (*Elohim Ḥayyim*), Living God; and it diminishes letters, embracing deficiency. From here [261b] it expands below to operate through these other letters, and to ascend from these letters to the name *Elohim*.[340]

"Once blessings are drawn from above into the fifth and fourth, as we have said, [*Malkhut*] begins embracing from the center of all—from the sixth hall—embracing blessings on this side and that. Accordingly, 'You' goes with all of them.[341]

"'You are holy and Your Name is holy.' Since it says, 'You are holy'—and 'You' merges with 'holy'—why 'and Your Name is holy'? 'Name' and 'holy' are one and the same! Well, we have learned: In every instance when unification and concatenation transpire, we require holiness and a surplus of holiness—and that surplus is the most essential

element of all. For this reason, in all [the other blessings] it is written ‘You’ and no more; but here, in this instance it mentions holiness and surplus holiness. ‘You are holy’—holiness; ‘and Your Name is holy’—surplus holiness.[342]

“‘And holy ones [praise you] every day’—the other supernal holy beings in each and every hall, sanctified from this surplus; for the first holiness is for Her, and the surplus holiness to sanctify all those others, as we have said.[343]

“Afterward, everything from on high and from all the fathers is bound in a single bond. This is ‘Blessed are You, *YHVH*, the holy God.’ Here all is a single nexus, for it says ‘Blessed are You, *YHVH*, the holy God.’ So it is called bond and nexus of all, in a single unity. Happy is the share of one who knows to arrange the praises of his Lord in the appropriate place! Until here: cleaving and blessings and holiness as one through the fathers.[344]

“From here on are found requests and supplications. A person should begin by requesting His affairs, to comprehend matters of his Lord, in order to display his desire for Him, and not disengage from Him. For a person must participate in the holiness of his Lord, in which the supernal holy name is crowned—the name of blessings and sanctifications: כוזו (*Kuzu*), mystery of the holy name יהוה (*YHVH*), sacred in sanctity. These other letters emerge from it [*YHVH*]; the union of these other letters like the union of male and female. These abide in the mystery of female in male, for He deploys His female in front of Him. When these supernal holy letters—mystery of holiness—generate these other letters, they are called טל (*tal*), dew; dew of heaven—mystery of the sum of letters, for here below all entities are susceptible to calculation, and there is no calculation save for the moon.[345]

“So, a person must be linked with the nexus of the holiness of his Lord and not disengage from Him. And when he makes requests, the beginning of requests is to display that his desire is toward Him. From here on, he may

disengage little by little and make his requests concerning whatever he needs to ask.[346]

"All his requests should be after he arranges this sequence that we have mentioned. Likewise, all his requests should be supplicatory and petitionary before his Lord, not vindicating himself. Happy is the share of one who knows to sequence this arrangement, to follow the straight path, as is fitting![347]

"Just as fire links with water and water with fire, south with north and north with south, east with west and west with east, so too everything concatenates as one—and unification is consummated, one with another.[348]

"All those who know how to arrange their prayers fittingly are concatenated within, drawn near to be included within them. He makes a request and it is granted. Happy is his share in this world and in the world that is coming![349]

"After concluding requests—body complete in all aspects with a joyful heart, having implored and concluded requests—he resumes drawing blessings and joy below: the third hall, conveying below. 'Be favorable, *YHVH*, our God, toward Your people Israel….' This pertains to the מעמדות (*ma'amadot*), stands—the supports of the body; beginning beneath the body—two thighs, extending to the knees. These are the mystery of the מעמדות (*ma'amadot*), standing men, presiding over the sacrifice. Here pertains the mystery of the beginning of the two thighs, from above to the knees, nexus of prophets, and visions, through the mystery of the letters of the holy name called השתפא (*Hshtpa*)—mystery of the name called צבאות (*Tseva'ot*): this ascending, that descending; this prophets, that visions.[350]

"Here pertains the sublime mystery of the *baraitot* that we have mentioned; and when a person reaches the knees, he kneels. 'Blessed are You, *YHVH*, who restores His *Shekhinah* to Zion.' Here *baraitot* return to Mishnah, and they are blessed as one.[351]

“Second [262a] hall below, in which souls are entrusted, ascending to appear in dream apparition. ‘We thankfully acknowledge’—bending knees, to give thanks for souls; as we say ‘for our souls that are entrusted to You’—like one taking leave of his master, until one reaches ‘the beneficent one is Your name, and to You it is fitting to give praise.’[352]

“This is within the mystery of the holy name called במוכן בם (*Bm Bmukn*)—that which is called אל אלהים (*El Elohim*), as it is in supernal mystery; אל אלהים יהוה (*El Elohim YHVH*), *He knows* (Joshua 22:22)—totality of these other letters emerging from them. Here is a single mystery, for all thighs—from knees beneath—pertain to mystery of the dream, mystery of that realm in which souls enter. We must draw down [flow] through these blessings, so as to find tranquility in this world and in the world that is coming.[353]

“Lowest hall—consummation below. Here pertains peace: peace above, peace below; peace in all dimensions; peace in the Family above, peace in the Family below. This is the Family below—the lowest hall, in a single bond with the Family [above], streaming from here to all those below outside.[354]

“This mystery combines and all is consummated as one, above and below in a single radiance, fulfilling the complete name; this name that is complete with all those halls—with all those supernal lights—so all becomes one.[355]

‘“Grant peace, goodness, and blessing….’ When a person takes leave from this hall to venture out, he should comport himself as one who is going forth from the fellowship of the King and from within His palace, humbling himself before Him. Nevertheless, he should be happy with himself, for he is first to don the crown of the flow of blessings streaming from the unification of his Lord. This one is a son—for he is of the King’s palace. For at this time, when he goes forth from the King, and everything is linked with all these facets of nexus of unity, blessings, holiness, and surplus holiness—the blessed Holy One summons the

Family above and says to them, ‘Record this person so-and-so among those called “contemplators of His name.”’[356]

“Who are the contemplators of His name? Those who contemplate and concentrate on the mystery of His name, uniting halls with halls, binding bonds, uniting all in a single unity. These are the contemplators of His name, as is said: *and contemplate His name* (Malachi 3:16). Then they record him and he is inscribed and known above, perfected above and below.[357]

“Whoever does not consummate and bind the bond of his Lord as we have said—when he draws near before his Lord and offers his prayer—and does not care about the glory of his Lord, better for him had he never been created! The blessed Holy One says: *Record this man as childless, a man who will not prosper in his days* (Jeremiah 22:30). This is *He who robs his father and mother* (Proverbs 28:24).[358]

“Here all is perfected above and below, mystery of the holy name presiding above: מצפץ מצפץ (*Mtspts Mtspts*)—יהוה יהוה (*YHVH YHVH!*) *A compassionate and gracious God* (Exodus 34:6). Here pertains the mystery of the holy name, sanctified in its letters in an assembly of ten, but in other letters in an individual’s sanctification in prayer. After he has finished, he stands on his feet to atone for his sins, so that the Other Side will not have an open mouth to accuse him. It is subdued before him; and he stands erect to be blessed from the house of the King.[359]

“Happy is the share of one who is sanctified in this manner in prayer as we have mentioned—binding bonds and enacting unifications, concentrating on all, not straying to the right or left! His prayer does not return unfulfilled! The blessed Holy One decrees and he abolishes. Of this is written *Your father and mother will rejoice, she who bore you will exult* (Proverbs 23:25). He has a share in this world and in the world that is coming![360]

“*In the evening she comes* (Esther 2:14), as is written: *She rises while it is still night, and gives food to her*

household and a portion to her maidens (Proverbs 31:15)—from that enhancement of blessings and holiness and surplus holiness She receives; as is said: *at evening dividing the spoil* (Genesis 49:27)—even a portion to all, another portion for the Other Side, a share of its own.[361]

"This mystery is a mystery for scions of faith. The share of the impure Other Side—all those sins and all those transgressions confessed by that person who bound bonds of unification. All of them settle upon the Other Side, and are the share and inheritance of the impure Other Side.[362] [262b]

"If he did not confess, the Accuser looms and prevails against him. But if he confessed all his sins, then in that prayer of unification he binds bonds, and above and below are blessed; and from that prayer the share of the Other Side is all those sins and transgressions he confessed—which it takes as its portion. This is the mystery of the goat, as is written: *He shall confess over it all the iniquities …* (Leviticus 16:21), and it is written: *The goat will bear* [*upon itself all their iniquities*] (ibid., 22)—its share, its potion, its inheritance.[363]

"Should that person revert to the stench of his sins—woe to him—for he takes them all back from that side, against its will. And because he takes them back from that side against its will, it assails him and turns into an Accuser against him, denouncing him. But when he confesses them, that Other Side takes them—its allotted share.

"This mystery pertains likewise to sacrifice, for one must confess all of one's sins and transgressions over the sacrifice, granting a share to the one who needs.

The entire sacrifice is for this side—share of the holy, aspiration of the holy. To that side—that share of those sins and transgressions imparted in confession upon the flesh of the sacrifice, as is written: *If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat. If he is thirsty, give him water to drink. For you are heaping burning coals on his head, and* YHVH *will*

reward you (Proverbs 25:21–22). Your mnemonic: *let the king and Haman come to the feast* (Esther 5:8). Happy is he who knows His path to walk the path of truth![364]

"Whoever does not know how to arrange the praise of his Lord—better for him had he never been created! For prayer that effects perfect peace above must come from within thought, desire of the heart, voice, and word of lips—to accomplish perfection, concatenation, and unification on high, corresponding to the supernal pattern. Just as perfection flows forth from above below, so is required from below above, to bind the bond fittingly.[365]

"Mystery for the Companions that they might walk the straight path: Thought, desire, voice, and word—these four bind bonds. Once joints are conjoined, entirely as one, they all become a single chariot that *Shekhinah* might alight upon them, becoming four supports with which to be adorned, *Shekhinah* resting upon them through all those supernal bonds.[366]

"Thought engenders desire; desire engenders voice; desire issuing from within thought engenders voice. Audible voice ascends to bind bonds from below above, lower halls with higher. Voice, which bind bonds and draws blessings from above below in a whisper, supports these four: Thought, Desire, Voice, and Word—support at culmination of the bond, site in which all is concatenated as one within.[367]

"Happy is the person who binds the bonds of his Lord—empowering supports as is fitting, focusing on all these matters we have mentioned! Happy is he in this world, and happy is he in the world that is coming!"

"It is written: *When Solomon finished offering to YHVH all this prayer and supplication, he rose from before the altar of YHVH, from kneeling on his knees, his palms spread out toward heaven* (1 Kings 8:54). Come and see: King Solomon offered prayer and prolonged it in order to draw down

blessings from above below. For at that hour when the house below was arrayed, the house above was arrayed; and he offered prayer and prolonged it—configuring his prayer to array above, to array below.[368]

"Even so, the prayer he offered was kneeling on his knees. Why kneeling on his knees? Well, it is a mystery for the Companions, who follow the straight path. Why kneeling on his knees? Because it is written *Hear You, O heaven, Your dwelling place* (1 Kings 8:39)—where all blessings from above are embedded, where all abides, so that all blessings would be manifest there. Why? For when the male receives blessings, the female is blessed from Him, as we have established. So Solomon desired to array the male, that that site would be blessed—for as soon as that site is blessed with all blessings, the female is blessed from Him below. Accordingly, *Hear You, O heaven*, and *Hear, O heaven* (ibid., 45, 49). So to actualize embedding in that site alone, he spread thighs—arraying the body.[369]

"Come and see the difference between the Dwelling constructed by Moses and this House constructed by Solomon. We have already established that the entire configuration of the First Temple pertains to Heaven—mystery of supernal array. Of this is written *from kneeling on his knees, his palms spread out toward heaven* (1 Kings 8:54)—for all its affairs were in Heaven, in the site where he ensconced the embedding of all. *Spread out toward heaven*—why *spread out*? Well, to manifest opening of blessings entirely, as is said: *You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing* (Psalms 145:16). Furthermore, to manifest the mystery of holy rungs, level upon level, that all will be blessed as one from the source of all. Similarly it is written *When Moses would raise his hand, Israel prevailed* (Exodus 17:11), as we have established.[370]

"Kneeling—this mystery corresponds to the enhancement of the mystery of Heaven where all blessings inhere, and the one who settles upon it, enhancement of

supernal mystery. Prostration—head, body, and all limbs; all for the higher world, corresponding to all the will of thought concealed there. Now, you might say, 'It is written: *I will prostrate at* היכל קדשך (*heikhal qodshekha*), *Your holy sanctuary* (Psalms 5:8)'—certainly so, for it is a higher world, היכל הקדש (*heikhal ha-qodesh*), chamber of the holy, and that which is below is a chamber for the one above. For there is an inner hall and then there is a hall below; and accordingly, prostration is directed above, with the head and the entire body as we have mentioned—all is in supernal mystery, fittingly. Bowing with one's face—for the lowest rung, receiving within all images and concealed faces, for this is falling on the face and bowing one's face below. So, everything is in supernal mystery, all rungs known by those who follow the straight path to cleave to their Lord.[371]

"Whoever knows to sequence the arrangement of his Lord—happy is his share in this world and in the world that is coming! Come and see: One who offers prayer should first arrange the praise of his Lord so as to honor his Lord, as is fitting. As for all those praises he arranges, countless are the Masters of Praises who praise and sing to their Lord—all of them joining with him—and he ascends through all those praises he arranges. Afterward, let him arrange prayer, to ascend on high to crown and draw Assembly of Israel between north and south that She might suckle from these two sides, two desires cleaving to Her. This is the mystery: *His left hand beneath my head, his right embracing me* (Song of Songs 2:6)—joining Redemption to Prayer. We and the Companions have already established this.[372]

"Aspiration of prayer must ascend, binding it above unto Infinity. For there is no word that does not require total intention—word and desire as is fitting—so that all becomes one. So, all words of Torah must comprise word and desire as one: word—the correct word; and desire above. All is in

mystery—revealed and secret. Likewise with all words of holiness and all sanctities of the blessed Holy One, so that the mystery of faith will be in supernal holiness, as is fitting.[373]

"Happy are the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming! The blessed Holy One will one day bless the righteous who fulfill His will with blessings from above, as is said: *For You bless the righteous, O YHVH, crowning him with favor like a shield* (Psalms 5:13). Until here are completed the halls on the Side of Holiness. Happy is the share of one who is careful and knows to unite the name of his Lord, as is fitting! Happy is he in this world and in the world that is coming!"[374]

Rabbi Shim'on opened, "*But they, like Adam, have violated the covenant. There they have been false to Me* (Hosea 6:7). Who will uncover the dust from your eyes, O Adam?! For the blessed Holy One commanded you a single commandment—yet you were unable to fulfill it, because you were seduced by the wicked words with which the evil serpent led you astray, as is written: *Now the serpent was slier* (Genesis 3:1). That is why you were lured after him and inflicted death upon yourself and upon all the offspring that issued from you. Come and see: Whoever is lured after him and descends toward him is lost in a single instant![375]

"Come and see: David's being was thrust in the font of flowing waters. When he was banished to another land and tormented—in accordance with his distress so was he banished from the holy land. Even though he descended from his rungs to the lowest rung he remained steadfast and did not enter the Other Side, and was on guard against it. What is written? *Indeed, as YHVH lives and as you live, there is but a step between me and death* (1 Samuel 20:3). For he descended from his rungs until he was that close. Happy is the share of one who is on guard against that Evil Side and all the rungs of that side lurking in the world![376]

“For the evil impulse has many facets and rungs: Writhing Snake, Satan, Angel of [263a] Death, Evil Impulse. It has already been established that even though it is called by these names it has seven names: Evil, Impure, Satan, Enemy, Stumbling Stone, Uncircumcised, Hidden One. These are seven names corresponding to the seven rungs of the halls—all of them the side of impurity, as we have said—corresponding to these seven names by which Hell is called, the site where the wicked of the world are judged: Pit, Destruction, Dumah, Miry Clay, Sheol, Shadow of Death, Netherworld. All of these are rungs corresponding to one another.[377]

“We have already established that just as there are rungs and halls on the Side of Holiness, so too on the Side of Impurity—all of them lurking and empowered in the world. On the impure left side are seven halls corresponding to the seven names by which the evil impulse is called, and corresponding to the seven names by which Hell is called, all of them poised for seduction and evil judgment, to defile human beings—those who cleave to them, not guarding their ways in this world.[378]

“One who comes to purify himself in this world in the side of purity is purified in that site called Mystery of Faith; for there are countless rungs and innumerable princes all poised to draw a person close to the worship of the blessed Holy One and purify him. But one who comes to defile himself is defiled in this Other Side—which is impure; for there are countless rungs and innumerable princes all poised to defile human beings who approach them, coming to be drawn after that Evil Side.[379]

“It is written: *What man alive will not see death, will save his life* [*from the grip of Sheol?*] (Psalms 89:49). What man created in the world will not see death, he after whom the whole world is drawn? For at the time when a person comes to render account before his Lord—before he

departs from this world—he sees him, as we have established.[380]

"These seven halls, which are the seven abodes of Hell, are called Twelve Months. For just as the Side of Faith has twelve months—holy rungs—so too this Other Side has twelve months, in which the wicked are punished and their souls judged. Happy is the share of the righteous who restrain their feet from them—not approaching their gates—so as to be saved from them in that world![381]

"First hall. Beginning of the side of the evil impulse. This first hall is called Pit, entirely empty. Whoever approaches to enter within has no one to hold on to him. Rather, they seize him so that he will fall, unable to rise. It has no beneficent support.[382]

"In this hall presides a prince named Dumah, presiding above and below. This is who seizes the soul when it is thrust out of the holy hall by that prince *Tohari'el*, and who stands by that portal of the Holy Side. Accordingly Dumah is stationed—to seize the soul, countless wardens of judgment with him.[383]

"Beneath this prince is stationed another prince, thousands and myriads beneath him, called פתותי (*Fatoti*), poised לפתאה (*le-fatta'ah*), to tempt, human beings—looming, luring one to gaze and glimpse upon all manner of adultery and fornication. As for all those with him, they all rise toward him [a person] and go before him, compelling him to divert his eyes to look upon what he must not.[384]

"This one is called סרסרים (*Sarsarim*)—wicked סרסורא (*sarsura*), agent, for all those evils. This one stands ready over the grave when that body is judged; and he smashes its eyes, for he acquired them when it was in this world—they belong to him![385]

"The soul is judged in this place until she enters this site called Pit, containing innumerable snakes and scorpions, all

of which sting that [263b] soul, seizing her and punishing her.[386]

"Deeper within is another impure spirit, exalted over all, presiding over this entire hall; all move on its account. This one is called גמגימא (*Gamgima*)—red as a rose, constantly poised to inflict harm. For when a person's prayer is rejected—that person not deserving—this spirit arises and ascends and collaborates with the ultimate impure spirit of all, accusing above, recalling the person's sins before the blessed Holy One. Your mnemonic: *and Satan* גם (*gam*), *also, came among them* (Job 1:10). It is not written *and Satan came*, but rather: גם (*gam*), *also*.[387]

"From this evil spirit derive numerous other wardens, appointed to seize an evil word or a filthy word that a person utters from his mouth, after which he utters holy words. Woe to them! Woe to their lives! These are the people who empower these other wardens to taint the holy site. Woe to them in this world, woe to them in the other world! For these impure spirits take this impure word, and afterward—when the person utters a holy word—these impure spirits intercept, and take that impure word and defile that holy word; and the person gets no merit for it, and holy power is weakened, as it were.[388]

"Above these is a prince named ספסירית (*Safsirita*). Countless wardens of judgment together with this prince above them seize these evil words. Likewise they take all those objects that a person throws with his hands in a fit of rage. For then this prince *Safsirita* seizes that object and ascends and says, 'This is the offering of so-and-so that he has offered to our side!'[389]

"For every facet of calm hails from the right side, the Side of Faith, whereas every facet of rage hails from the evil Other Side, the side of impurity. Therefore, one who casts something from his hands in rage—all these seize this object that was thrown and raise it on high, and it is offered to that side, and they say, 'This is the offering of so-and-so!'

“A herald proclaims throughout all the firmaments, ‘Woe to so-and-so, who strayed after a foreign god and worshiped another god!’ The herald proclaims a second time, saying, ‘*Woe to them for wandering from Me*… (Hosea 7:13).’ Happy is the person who is on guard against its ways—not straying to the right or left—not falling within a deep pit from which he cannot climb out![390]

“Second hall. This hall is darker than the first hall. This one is called Destruction, corresponding to the name Impure; for the first hall is called Pit, corresponding to the name Satan, and this one is called Destruction, corresponding to the name Impure. In this hall are found three openings on three sides.[391]

“First opening. Stationed within is a prince named עסטיריא (*Astiriya*), and many thousands and myriads of deputies beneath him, presiding over all those who corrupt their ways by spilling seed on the ground, or who eject seed unnaturally, or all those who fornicate with their hands. These are they who do not see the face of *Shekhinah* at all. Rather, at that time, this prince on the side of impurity that we have mentioned goes forth, and all those thousands and myriads—all of whom swarm around that man and defile him in this world. Afterward, when his soul departs from this world, this prince and all those with him defile him, and they seize him and she [the soul] is defiled by them, and they usher her within to be punished among them.[392]

“These are called Boiling Seminal Emission, for all impure powers of fury preside over this one; because all of them loom and hover over a man when he excites himself, getting him hot for this lust. Then they seize that lust and that seed spilled on the ground, and they are energized by it, and they take it and raise it on high, causing this covenant to be enslaved to the side of impurity.[393] [264a]

“Second opening. Stationed within is another prince named טסקיפה (*Tasqifah*), ordained over all those who corrupt

their ways not by spilling seed on the ground, but by discharging seed in animals, or in those forbidden sexual relations gravely prohibited by Torah. For this prince and the many thousands and myriads with him all arise to defile him, as has been said concerning the others.[394]

"Come and see: All those put to death by the court or punished for these sins are plucked from these impure realms and have no share in them, nor in this cup called *Cup of Staggering* (Isaiah 51:17). For all those who did not drink that cup of the court to be spared this *Cup of Staggering*—afterward, when he departs this world, this prince and all those with him seize him; and this is *the bitter day*—they saturate the soul with countless punishments differing from one another.[395]

"In this hall abides one spirit—these princes beneath him—and this is ניאצירִיאל (*Ni'atsiri'el*). From this [spirit] three bitter drops ooze that drip into this *Cup*. One is called חצץ (*Ḥatsats*); one is called מר המות (*Mar ha-mavet*); and one is called קובעת (*Qubba'at*). All of them gather in that *Cup*. Subsequently, three drops pour from this *Cup* to that sword that slays human beings, as has been established.[396]

"Third opening. Stationed within is a prince named סנגדיאל (*Sangadi'el*), appointed over all those who insert this holy covenant into another woman from the side of an alien god. As for all those who ruin their ways through this, betraying the sign of the holy covenant—this prince and all those deputies with him all draw in their midst images of those impure women in whom that holy covenant was defiled. When the man departs this world, all of them are inscribed before him, defiling him thereafter.[397]

"On the spirit within this hall hinge the mysteries of sorcery to kill people before their time, and all the sorcery employed by human beings; those who perform their sorcery in which they are defiled—as when Balaam would perform his sorcery, first defiling himself with the defilement of boiling semen that he discharged into

animals. That is why he was punished in boiling seminal emission, as we have mentioned; and that is why this hall is called Impure Destruction.[398]

"In this hall there is another spirit, ordained beneath the spirit above, called סרטיא (*Saratya*), and countless thousands and myriads beneath him. All of them arise when a dream issues from within the Holy Side. The word issues forth, and this spirit and all those wardens with him venture out and converge on that word, descending upon it and mingling within, in order to impair it; and they divulge to the person other words—false material.[399]

"So is the way of the deceiver: were he not to convey a truthful matter, he would not be able to configure his deceptions; likewise with these. Afterward, all those beneath, lacking stable existence, branch out below, and they divulge matters in the world to numerous sides. All of these are below, occupying rungs that separate out to various species, to numerous sides.[400]

"From the side of this hall venture two spirits—transmogrifying: sometimes male, sometimes female. These range and roam through the world and titillate human beings, appearing to them as beautiful women in the apparition of a dream, seizing lust.[401]

"These are called lower spirits below, issuing from within a flame. For when these spirits above that are within this hall set out, two flames of fire shoot forth; and these soar though the world and transform into these two spirits, as we have mentioned, all on this side. Happy are the righteous who restrain themselves from these types and are on guard against them! Of [264b] this is written *To protect you from a strange woman, from an alien woman whose talk is smooth* (Proverbs 7:5).[402]

"Third hall. This hall is a hall that is gloomy and dark, containing no light whatsoever, gloomier than the preceding. This is the one called Dumah, corresponding to

the name called Enemy. In this hall are found four openings: one to this side, one to that side, [and so on to four sides].[403]

"A prince presides over this first opening; and this prince is sustained by the potency of the world's rage. When judgment looms over the world, the prince located in this opening takes up weapons and stores them at the gates of the synagogue. This one is called סקפורטיא (*Seqaportya*)—stumbling block of the world. Of this is written *The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what will make them stumble* (Proverbs 4:19). This prince waits by crossroads, to see when he holds sway and judgment looms over the world. He waits to see who is walking alone in the streets; and if he encounters him, he is able to harm him and impair his fortune.[404]

"Second opening. Stationed within is another prince, poised to receive decrees of judgment; this is סנגדיאל (*Sangadi'el*)—and under his charge, countless empowered wardens of law poised to receive those decrees of judgment. This one presides over this opening; and when he receives the decree of judgment, he descends below to those dark openings beneath, to the one called Destruction, and to another called Pit, which are below, where are thousands and myriads empowered to soar through the world to execute judgment—and the judgment in the decree is fulfilled.[405]

"Third opening. Here is another prince named אנגריון (*Anagriyon*), presiding over all illness, pain, trembling fever, and fire in the bones. For countless, innumerable thousands and myriads issue from him, ordained with him over all illness and pain, as has been said.[406]

"Fourth opening. Here inheres a spirit created on the moon's defectiveness, called אסכרא (*Askara*), Diphtheria—presiding over the killing of children. This one manifests to them as the woman of the child. She suckles them, seizes them, and slaughters them.[407]

“In the middle of this hall abides a spirit called אגירסון (*Agirison*), ordained over all those who die between the ages of thirteen and twenty; he is their slayer, as we have established. This one is in partnership with that serpent, as we have mentioned, arising with him, following him. Accordingly the Angel of Death is called *very good*, as is written: *and behold it was very good* (Genesis 1:31), as we have already established.[408]

“From here two spirits disperse and depart—Wrath and Rage, appointed over all those who hear rebuke from one who toils in Torah but do not trust him and are jealous of him; similarly, over all those who mock words of Torah or words of the Rabbis.[409]

“From Wrath and Rage issue countless thousands and innumerable myriads; and all of them sally forth, hovering over those people engaging in Torah, or engaging in matters of commandment, or embarking on a commandment—so that they will be saddened and find no delight therefrom. Of these two was Moses afraid when Israel sinned and he was descending from the mountain, as is written: *For I was in dread of the wrath and rage* (Deuteronomy 9:19).[410]

“Beneath these is a spirit presiding over all those masters of evil tongue. When these of evil tongue rouse, or when even a single person rouses to gossip, then this impure spirit above called סכסיכא (*Saksika*) stirs. He hovers over that arousal of evil tongue and alights upon it. He enters [above], and through that speech inflicts death, sword, and slaughter. [265a] Woe to those who arouse this side—not guarding their mouths and tongues, not careful about this—unaware that another arousal depends on its arousal![411]

“Come and see: When this arousal of evil tongue stirs below, then this *writhing snake, elusive snake* (Isaiah 27:1) raises its scales, establishes them ascendantly, and rouses from its head to its feet. When its scales ascend and arouse,

the entire body arouses; its scales are all the wardens of judgment without. All of them stir and delight in that evil word, rousing toward it. Afterward, the entire evil body arouses from its head to its feet in all these halls we have mentioned. All those scales in that coat descend below, and that coat itself sheds and descends below—while the body ascends and arouses, becoming a slanderer above.[412]

"Come and see: Even though there is a fixed time for all the serpents of the world to shed their skin, they shed only when gossip abounds in the world—whereupon the evil serpent above arouses and sheds its skin and scales. This ascends and that descends. This shedding of scales and skin is most difficult of all. Why so? Because he separates from his mate; for were all to be in a single convergence, worlds could not endure them. All is on account of the arousal of evil tongue below![413]

"When serpents below shed that skin, each one emits a sound, stirring innumerable serpents abiding in that site called Pit, where countless snakes are found, all of them slandering to arouse the great serpent, who ascends and slanders on high—all on account of evil tongue, when its arousal prevails below.[414]

"Correspondingly, whoever engages in Torah—innumerable are the ones called לשון הקדש (*leshon ha-qodesh*), holy tongue, who join together and stimulate arousal to that site called *Leshon Ha-Qodesh*, Tongue of Holiness—tongue from that holiness above, countless holy powers arousing on all sides. Happy is the share of the righteous, for they cause the arousal of holy powers above and below—holiness above and holiness below![415]

"Of this is written *Sanctify yourselves and be holy* (Leviticus 11:44). *Sanctify yourselves*—first waters, upper waters; *and be holy*—lower waters, called final waters; food in the middle—between first waters and final waters. So, food does not inhere in final waters, but rather in first waters. First waters—from on high, from where food

derives; not in final waters. The mystery has been bequeathed to the holy ones of the Most High. Happy is their share in this world and in the world that is coming![416]

"Fourth hall. This hall is called חובה (*Ḥovah*), Guilt, and this is Miry Clay, corresponding to the other name called Stumbling Stone; all is one. *Ḥovah*, Guilt—because there abides all the guilt of the world; חובין (*ḥovin*), sins, tipping the balance.[417]

"In this hall are found all the sins of the inhabitants of the world. For when people sin, all the wardens of judgment take those sins and deposit them in this hall. As for all the merits of the world—all the holy angels take them and place them in the fourth hall called Merit. Merits are stored in the hall called Merit, and sins are stored in the other hall called Guilt; and they are weighed together: *one against the other God has set* (Ecclesiastes 7:14). After either merits or sins tip the balance to one side or another, so is the outcome.[418]

"So, on the day of Rosh Hashanah, when these two sides join—Merit and Guilt, Life and Death—if merits tip the balance to the side called Merit, the person is inscribed in that side called Life. [265b] For these two sides stand poised on that day: one on this side, and one on that side. If the person is worthy and merits prevail, that person is inscribed for life—for this holy side embraces him, saying, 'This one is mine! He belonged to me!' and it is inscribed that he belongs to him. If sins prevail, this other side called Guilt and Death embraces him, saying, 'This one is mine! He belonged to me!' Then it is inscribed that he belongs to him. This is as we have learned: On this day a person is inscribed for either life or death. If he is inscribed for this side, he is established in the side of holiness, cleaving within. If he is inscribed for the other side, he is established in the side of impurity and cleaves to it. This is: for either life or death—drawn to this side, or that side.[419]

“As long as he abides in this side of holiness, all sanctity and all purity cleave to him. When he calls out, the blessed Holy One answers and hears him. Of him is written *When he calls Me I answer him, I am with him in distress. I deliver him and grant him honor. With length of days I shall sate him, and show him My salvation* (Psalms 91:15). As long as he abides in the other side of impurity, all defilement, all sins, and all evils cleave to him. When he calls out, no one hears him; he is far from the blessed Holy One. Of him is written *Far from the wicked is salvation* (ibid. 119:155), and it is written: *Even if you make many prayers, I will not listen* (Isaiah 1:15).

“This hall is the realm of all those called ‘other gods’—for they are manifest here—as well as all those who seduce human beings with the pleasures of this world, to whore and revel in the lascivious delights of the world, luring them after the delights and debaucheries of this world, as we have said.[420]

“Here a potent ruling spirit is manifest, above all, also called אל (*el*), god, corresponding to the other one in the side of holiness. This one is אל נכר (*el nekhar*), *alien god*—and this is who seduces a person who is engaged in Torah, or who is found in the house of study. He seduces him and concocts numerous fantasies, saying, ‘What are you doing here? It is better for you to go in the company of the arrogant, those who pursue beautiful women, and those who revel in the delights of the world!’[421]

“As soon as the person is seduced and strays after him, then all roam and are drawn after him; for countless are the others stationed beneath [this spirit], and all of them defile him in this world and defile him in that world. These are called Boiling צואה (*Tso’ah*), Excrement, as is written: ‘צא (*Tse*), *Out!’ you will call to it* (Isaiah 30:22). These are rungs constantly poised to defile, as explained.[422]

“In the middle of this hall is another spirit called נגע (*Nega*), Plague, from which emerges another spirit called

נגע צרעת (*Nega Tsara'at*), Scaly Plague, poised to defile all those masters of evil tongue, more so than all they have [already] defiled him.[423]

"This supreme *Nega* is appointed over all tables. For when Sabbath enters and they have not been arranged with ענוגא (*innuga*), delight, as is fitting, and they scorn Sabbath delight, this *Nega* acquires those tables not [arrayed] with Sabbath delights, as we have said. And when this one acquires those tables, all those wardens of judgment who are standing by open, saying, '*He loved cursing—may it come upon him! He did not want blessing—may it be far from him!* (Psalms 109:17); *May he be clothed in a curse like a garment*... (ibid., 18); *May the creditor seize all that he has*... (ibid., 11); *May no one extend to him kindness*... (ibid., 12).'[424]

"We have already established that on Sabbath eve when tables are granted to the Evil Side, that Evil Side is invigorated and that person is handed over to that side. Woe to him—for he is diminished from the Side of Faith, and is entrusted to the Other Side! All [holiday] meals follow this pattern.[425]

"Here, in this hall: [266a] children, life, and sustenance—inversely from that other hall. In that other hall these three do not pertain, depending above. Here they inhere for ill. When a person's judgments reach this hall—there, life abides to annihilate them; there, children [are judged for death] when they are young, [evil spirits] emerging from here to be appointed accuser over them; there, sustenance to be deprived them. All depends on guilt—and that is why it [this hall] is called Guilt, as has been said.[426]

"From here issues an impure spirit called אריריא (*Arirya*), and countless thousands and myriads with him, all of them called אוררי יום (*Orrei Yom*), Day-Cursers, as is said: *Let the day-cursers damn it* (Job 3:8). This spirit and all those with him stand by to seize that word with which a person curses himself in rage, stirring this serpent called *Leviathan the*

writhing snake (Isaiah 27:1) to bring and arouse curses, as is said: *those skilled to stir Leviathan* (Job 3:8).[427]

"These preside during moments and hours of each day, and seize all those words of those who curse themselves in rage or curse themselves in oath. All of them take that word and with it arouse Leviathan in order to activate him. So, Job cursed himself in his sorrow, as is written: *and cursed his day* (Job 3:1)—at first, and afterward: *Let the day-cursers damn it*… (ibid., 8). May the Compassionate One save us from the Evil Side and from its power![428]

"Fifth hall. This hall is the hall called Sheol, corresponding to the one called Uncircumcised; and we have established that this is the mystery of the foreskin. In this hall there is one opening and one prince above it, always denouncing, inciting accusation against the world constantly. This is איבה (*Eivah*), Enmity, because this spirit is so named, and so this hall is called *Eivah*. Your mnemonic: *I will put enmity between you and the woman*… (Genesis 3:15).[429]

"In this hall presides a spirit that rules over all, called שודד (*Shoded*)—שד ושבר (*shod va-shever*), *wrack and ruin*—who שודד (*shoded*), pillages, in high mountains among cliffs and crags. For from this hall suckle all bandits and marauders [lurking] in ruins. From here issue all slayers by sword and spear, following *the flame of the ever-turning sword* (Genesis 3:24) to annihilate all.[430]

"When famine prevails upon the world, this spirit called שד (*Shod*), Plunder, looms—and another spirit with him called כפן (*Kafan*), Famine; and these roam through the world, manifesting against human beings. This is the significance of what is written: *You will laugh at plunder and famine* (Job 5:22). These level accusation against human beings, and pillage all. As for the one called Plunder—once he has roamed among high mountains pillaging, destroying, and annihilating all, he then returns and pillages human beings; and they die from the weakness he imposes. As for the

other—people eat but they are not sated, because he has dominion in the world.[431]

"At that time, whoever performs kindness with people—giving them food and drink—is worthy of driving these two spirits away, so that they will not prevail in the world. But when Israel do not perform kindness with people, and the other nations arouse kindness in the world, then these two spirits are tempered for them and are empowered over Israel, for then that Other Side is strengthened and Israel are subdued. But when Israel perform kindness, that Other Side is subdued—and the Side of Holiness is strengthened.[432]

"If not, those two spirits are tempered. One is sweetened for the other nations and suckles them; and [the other] turns to subdue Israel. Then blessings flow from above, from the right side to the left, and all those stationed to that side imbibe, as is written: *they made me guardian of the vineyards* (Song of Songs 1:6)—the other nations; *my own vineyard I did not guard* (ibid.)—Israel; for other nations draw down [bounty] within, through the acts of kindness they perform, whereas Israel distance it from themselves, because they do not engage in those acts of kindness.[433]

"Beneath these are found all those called Foreskin, Clippings of [266b] Foreskin, Branches of Foreskin—and above them a prince called גזר דינייא (*Gezar Dinayya*), presiding over all those who do not keep the years of foreskin of trees, and over all those who delay the sign of the covenant for their sons. That is why the serpent sought to slay Moses' son, until Zipporah circumcised him, as is written: *Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin…* (Exodus 4:25).[434]

"This [spirit] is empowered when a person perverts his way—not caring about the honor of his Lord to guard the sign of the holy covenant—and ushers him into Hell, to that

site called Sheol and Avadon, where he is judged, as we have established.[435]

"Here in this hall, deep within the middle, is a spirit who waits and lurks by paths and trails to spy all those who violate the words of Torah, to inject hostility between below and above—for this entire hall is enmity.[436]

"This one, as well as all the others, all stand poised to manifest lustrous countenances to human beings, to seduce them so that they will stray from the path of truth, luring them toward them. Afterward, they slay them and they die in two worlds, as is written: *But in the end she is as bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword* (Proverbs 5:4).[437]

"This spirit is called אפרא (*Afra*)—אפר (*efer*), ash; דקיטמא אפרא (*afra de-qitma*), ash of ashen cinders, that never generates offspring and fruit, for this is עפרא דקיטמא (*afra de-qitma*), dust of ashes. And even though it is called dust, it is not holy dust that generates fruit—called *dust of gold* (Job 28:6)—but rather as is said: *from the dust of the burning of* החטאת (*ha-ḥattat*), *the purification offering* (Numbers 19:17)—this is the dust of the burning of החטאת (*ha-ḥattat*). This mnemonic proceeds by two modes: one, for it is included in this חטאת (*ḥattat*), mystery of that potent serpent; and another, for when a person performs חטאת (*ḥattat*), a sin, he empowers this dust to gain dominion in the world.[438]

"This [spirit] is included in *the bitter curse-conveying waters* (Numbers 5:18). Accordingly, the woman who strayed from her husband, perpetrating the deed of the woman of whoredom, must be made to drink water mixed with dust, which is from the floor of the Dwelling. This dust is from that realm called 'floor'—called floor of that Dwelling; this dust hails from that floor. That is why the priest must make this woman drink in this manner; all is in supernal allusion.[439]

"Happy is the share of Israel, for the blessed Holy One purifies them with supernal pure waters, as is written: *I will*

sprinkle pure water upon you, and you will be pure (Ezekiel 36:25)! *Pure waters*—we have already explained [the difference] between first waters and final waters; and even though we have already established this, first waters are מצוה (*mitsvah*), a meritorious act, and are called accordingly; final waters are חובה (*ḥovah*), an obligation, and are called accordingly. We have established regarding the two sides: this Side of Holiness is called מצוה (*Mitsvah*); and this Other Side is called חובה (*Ḥovah*), Sin, and so it takes a share in that water. Of this is written *I will sprinkle pure water upon you, and you will be pure*.[440]

"Sixth hall. This hall stands supreme above all the other lower halls. There are four openings to this hall: one called Death, one called Evil, one called Shadow of Death, and one called Darkness. These four openings are constantly poised to inflict harm. These are a single totality.[441]

"Just as in the Holy Side in the mystery of faith there are four directions, interconnected, all of them holy, so too here. And when these connect ומתחברן (*u-mitḥabberan*), and conjoin, together as one in this hall, it is called בית חבר (*beit ḥaver*), a conjoined house, as is said: *than a contentious woman* ובית חבר (*u-veit ḥaver*), *in a shared house* (Proverbs 21:9). This hall is always poised to inflict harm.[442]

"Of this hall is written *Excessive are kisses of an enemy* (Proverbs 27:7), for here abide all those wicked kisses and evil desires, and all the carnal delights of this world—those delights by which a person is banished from this world and the world that is coming. Of this is written *For the lips of a strange woman drip* [267a] *honey; her palate is smoother than oil*. (ibid. 5:3).[443]

"In this hall a spirit abides, ordained over all those below, totality of all the other spirits. This hall is adorned with the most exquisite ornaments of all the halls. In this hall the feet of fools are trapped. Of this is written *Do not*

lust for her beauty in your heart or let her captivate you with her eyes (Proverbs 6:25).[444]

"Here hang all worldly desires and all the pleasures of senseless fools, as is said: *I saw among the simple, I noticed among the youths, a lad devoid of sense. He was crossing the street near her corner*, [*walking toward her house*] *in the dusk of evening*, [*in the dark hours of night*] (Proverbs 7:7–9). Then, his feet draw near to this hall, totality of all those below; then—*a woman comes toward him*, שׁית (*shit*), *decked out, like a harlot, wily of heart* (ibid., 10). שׁית (*Shit*), *Decked out*—this hall that is שׁית (*shit*), sixth, of all the other halls. Here abides the harlot to seduce fools.[445]

"In this hall she abides-not-abiding, descends and seduces, ascends and accuses, as is said: *her feet never stay at home* (Proverbs 7:11). *Now in the street, now in the square* (ibid., 12). *Now in the street*—when she descends below; *now in the square*—when she ascends above; *she lurks at every corner* (ibid.)—when she seizes the soul.[446]

"What is written? *She seizes him and kisses him* (Proverbs 7:13)—kisses to defile and lead people astray after her; for here is the cleaving of all evils, of all alien species, sweet momentarily but woe at their end, as we have established—as is written: *her palate is smoother than oil* (ibid. 5:3), and it is written: *But in the end she is as bitter as wormwood* (ibid., 4). What is the significance of *bitter*? This refers to a person who was seduced after her in this world and whose time comes to depart the world. She stands over the person and manifests before him in the guise of a body of fire, a sharp sword in hand, three drops within, as has been established.[447]

"One of those drops is bitter; and the moment he flings it into the person's mouth it penetrates his gut, whereupon the soul is confounded. That drop sails and advances, and uproots the soul from her place—not leaving the soul anywhere to dwell. It is *as bitter as wormwood*; and the person tastes it in bitterness, in return for the sweetness

they tasted in this world when they were lured after her. Afterward, he drips another drop—and the soul departs and the person dies; and afterward he drips another—and his face turns green and he putrefies. Because the soul is holy; and when this Other Side prevails, she is uprooted in its presence—they do not reside together.[448]

"Thus, just as one cleaved to those wicked kisses in this world, similarly too at this hour. For if a person was drawn after her in this world and abandoned the Holy Side, his soul does not return to that holy realm; for just as he was drawn after her in this world, accordingly does she prevail upon his soul, whereupon his soul departs with great difficulty, as they have established. All this on account of those kisses she kissed him in this world—kisses that are sweet in this world, but afterward bitter for him at that time. Of this [is written] *She seizes him and kisses him* (Proverbs 7:13)—in this world, as we have established.[449]

"*Brazen faced she says to him* (Proverbs 7:13). For in this hall abide all accusers and all evil emissaries that lurk by a person—prodding him to adorn his adornments, curl his hair, bathe, and groom himself in order to attract attention. Here abides a spirit called סקטופא (*Seqatofa*), in charge of human grooming and curling.[450]

"Deep within this hall abides another prince, which that other prince causes a person to arouse. For after he has groomed and curled himself, he places a mirror—which is vision—in his hand into which to gaze. He places it in his hand, and he gazes and beholds his image in that vision, arousing that other power called עסירטא (*Asirta*). From here issue all those who display deceptions to people in their dreams, and all those masters of vision—those who display matters to the inhabitants of the world that they do not fulfill, merely to baffle them.[451] [267b]

"Afterward, when people are drawn to that vision called Mirror, all of them abiding in their arrogance, this spirit we mentioned called *Asirta* arouses a deputy under his charge—

who enters the chasm beneath all chasms, raising from there another spirit appointed with that spirit called אסכרא (*Askara*), Diphtheria, as we have mentioned. This is Lilith, mother of demons. When a person arouses this other spirit called *Asirta*, he joins with that person and is bound to him always. Then every new moon, that spirit of evil vision arouses together with Lilith; and sometimes that person is harmed by them, and dies—falling to the ground unable to rise—or suffers great harm. The vision of the mirror causes this! Just as he amplifies arrogance in his heart, so he amplifies an evil spirit toward him; hence, all depends on arousal below.[452]

"זבחי שלמים עלי (*Zivḥei shelamim alai*), *I had to make sacrifices of well-being, today I fulfilled my vows* (Proverbs 7:14). Come and see: *I had to make sacrifices of well-being*. שלמים (*Shelamim*), Offerings of well-being, are not brought either for guilt or sin, but for peace. What is meant by שלום (*shalom*), peace? Well, *shelamim* on two sides—so that the Accuser will not prevail above, and so that the Accuser will not prevail below. Who is the Accuser? This is the left side, of the Evil Impulse, abiding in peace with the right. Hence, זבחי שלמים עלי (*zivḥei shelamim alai*), *sacrifices of well-being for me. For me*, precisely! The sacrifices of well-being are *for me* so that the Accuser will not be found in the world.[453]

"Alternatively, *I had to make sacrifices of well-being*. Look, I am peacefully disposed toward you, to show you peace. Hence, *today I fulfilled my vows* (Proverbs 7:14)—to seduce the inhabitants of the world constantly. *Therefore I have come out to you* (ibid., 15)—for I know that you are devoid of sense, devoid of goodness. *Seeking you* (ibid.)—to join with you, with all the evils of the world; and it befits you to whore and stray after the desires of the world. (And she pushes him from one thing to another, from evil to evil.) I have traversed among the fools and sought you, *and have found you* (ibid.)—I have already found you to cleave to you!

“*Come, let us drink deeply of love till morning* (Proverbs 7:18)—as is written: *The eyes of the adulterer watch for twilight, thinking ‘No one will glimpse me then.’ He masks his face* (Job 24:15), for then is his time to prevail. *Come, let us drink deeply of love*—let us go together; I am with you. You are still a youth, still in your power. If now you do not delight yourself, then when? When you will be old?! Now is the time! Why? *For the man is not in his home* (Proverbs 7:19)—the good impulse, which does not reside here within you; it is not [his] time. *He is gone on a long journey* (ibid.)—look, he resides only with a person *on a long journey*, when a person grows older, from thirteen years and onward, and not in every person. As for me—since the day you were born; all the more so now, while you are unmarried. Now is your time to delight yourself![454]

“צרור הכסף (*Tseror ha-kesef*), *A bundle of desire, he took with him* (Proverbs 7:20)—ascending above, lingering there, delighting therein. ליום הכסא (*Le-yom ha-kese*), *At the day of the new moon, he will come home* (ibid.). When will he return to confront you? *Le-yom ha-kese*, which is the day to scrutinize in judgment, as is written: בכסה (*ba-keseh*), *at the covering, for our festival day* (Psalms 81:4). When a person needs to delight in the world and enjoy it, he distances himself from him; but when he abides in judgment, he approaches to render judgment with him. Of this [is written] *She sways him with her eloquence*, [*turns him aside with her smooth talk. Thoughtlessly he follows her, like an ox going to the slaughter, like a fool to the stocks for punishment,*] *until the arrow pierces his liver* (Proverbs 7:21–23). Happy are the righteous who know to walk holy paths, not straying to the right or left! Happy are they in this world and in the world that is coming![455]

“Seventh hall. This is the hall of dregs of wine—intoxicating, as is said: *He drank of the wine and became drunk* (Genesis 9:21). The squeezing of all those grapes, entirely evil, is

here; and this is the significance of *foaming wine* (Psalms 75:9)—dregs of wine: no one drinks from it without inflicting death upon himself. This is what Eve gave her husband to taste, ushering him into this hall. As we have learned: She squeezed grapes and offered them to him—inflicting death upon him and the whole world after him.[456]

"In this hall abide all the impure souls that descend to those of this side, who cleave therein; as well as that spirit that descends to all those from this side—from here they issue. Accordingly it engenders [spirit] for those who perverted their ways in this world, engaging in fornication where they should not, shunning the path of truth. Then, just as he cleaved [268a] to that evil impulse in fornication, so an impure spirit issues from this hall to defile him; and the child is called ממזר (*mamzer*), a bastard, for he hails from the side of אל זר (*el zar*), alien god. Just as he became drunk with that desire and that fornication, so he draws upon that child another impure spirit, defiling him; and all attest that he is a bastard, all his deeds and tendencies in that very vein.[457]

"From this hall issues a spirit, appointed over those spirits, called צפוני (*Tsfoni*), Hidden One; your mnemonic: רוח צפניה צפן (*Tsofneyah tsafan ruaḥ*), *Restraining her is like restraining the wind* (Proverbs 27:16). He is ordained over this hall. This site corresponds to the site called Netherworld. Of this is written *I will drive* הצפוני (*ha-tsefoni*), *the hidden one, far from you* (Joel 2:20).[458]

"Here is a single point abiding deep within. From here sally forth all those other spirits that roam the world, gaining dominion in this world through all those actions bequeathed to the left side. From here shoot forth all those scintillating sparks that extinguish immediately—flashing and extinguishing. From these issue other spirits that roam the world, emerging from the great abyss—which is this hall, as is said: *Your judgments, the great abyss* (Psalms

36:7). These are the spirits not consigned to be embodied in material bodies—seen and not seen, as has been said.[459]

"Afterward, those spirits that roam the world arise to perform miracles for human beings, because these do not remain in such filth of defilement like the others. A spirit is appointed over them, called נסירא (*Nesira*), for he אתנסר (*itnesar*), was sawn off, from those extremely impure sides. These fly through the air and inflict harm on their side in order to perform miracles for those on the Side of Holiness.[460]

"From this sawn-off spirit called *Nesira* issue countless other species, ramifying according to their kinds, all of them functioning as emissaries in the world, every single one as is fitting, until they are appointed below as kings and officers; they do not endure permanently like those others above.[461]

"In this hall is the clinging of the side of impurity, and all impure desires that defile the world. This [hall] is poised to fire off at any moment, at any hour—none can withstand it. From here radiates fire of potent wind below, to judge the wicked, as well as flaming wind—fire and snow, called צלמון (*Tsalmon*), as is said: *it snows* בצלמון (*be-tsalmon*), *on Black Mountain* (Psalms 68:15).[462]

"In this hall are found four openings, opening outward in four directions, grasping-not-grasping the Side of Holiness. Not attached, but rather through those openings luminous light can be seen. This is the site prepared, in every single opening, for the pious of other nations who did not harm Israel and dealt with them in truth. These abide in these openings on this side, reposing from that side.[463]

"In the opening of this hall—in the middle, outside—there are six openings attached to this hall, all of them grasping it. Here are windows open to the side of the light of holiness—places prepared for the kings of other nations, those who did not afflict Israel and protected them constantly. These possess honor on account of Israel—and

delight in the deep darkness in which they reside from the light radiating from the Side of Holiness, as is said: [*All*] *the kings of nations were laid, every one, in honor* (Isaiah 14:18).[464]

"But if they caused anguish for Israel or oppressed them, many are they who seize them below and punish them thrice daily, with countless punishments differing from one another—those kings who afflicted them, judged in that world with numerous punishments. Every single day they bear witness for Israel—to their faith—and they descend below where they are punished. Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming!

"Thus concludes the seven halls—abodes of defilement, from the side of the serpent. Happy is the share of one who is saved from him and from his charms, so that he will not be bitten by him, injected with venom and die! [268b] From all sides must one be on guard against him—from above and from below. One who is saved from the head is not saved from the tail. When he raises the tail, he strikes and slays.[465]

"Even so, *Does the snake bite without a whisper?* (Ecclesiastes 10:11). As we have learned: He obtains authorization and plucks out the soul. Therefore a person must be careful not to sin before the blessed Holy One, so that the serpent will not be whispered to, and bite and slay."[466]

פִּיקּוּדִין

Piqqudin

COMMANDMENTS

The commandments of the Lord of the World.[1]

We have learned: As is written: *You shall observe all My commandments and do them* (Leviticus 22:31). If observing is required—why doing? Furthermore, all the commandments of Torah are in two modes that are one: *Remember* and *Observe*; זכור (*zakhor*), remember, for דכורא (*dekhora*), male; and שמור (*shamor*), observe, for female—all one totality. If observe pertains to female, why is it written *You shall observe all My commandments*?[2]

In fact, all is in this verse: ושמרתם (*u-shemartem*), *You shall observe*—שמור (*shamor*), observe; ועשיתם (*va-asitem*), *and do*—זכור (*zakhor*), remember, for all is a single mystery. זכירה (*Zekhirah*), Remembrance, constitutes doing; for one who אדכר (*adkar*), recalls, something below arrays and actualizes that mystery above. The commandments of Torah are 613—entirety of male and female; all a single mystery.[3]

[2:25a] The first commandment: the primary beginning of all the commandments is to know the blessed Holy One in general. What is meant by “in general”? To know that there is a supreme power who is Master of the Universe, and created all worlds—heaven and earth and all their forces. This is the meaning of “in general.” The end of all—“in particular”; to know Him in particular.[4]

General and particular are beginning and end, mystery of male and female as one. Consequently, the human being

in this world engages in general and particular; the human being in this world comprises general and particular; the restoration of this world is general and particular. So, the beginning of all is to know that there is a ruler and judge over the world, and that He is Master of all worlds, and created the human being from dust, and blew into his nostrils the soul-breath of life. This is the meaning of "in general terms."[5]

When Israel left Egypt, they did not know the blessed Holy One. When Moses came to them, the first commandment that he taught them was as is written: *and you shall know that I am YHVH your God—who takes you out…* (Exodus 6:7). Were it not for this commandment, Israel would not have believed in all those miracles and mighty deeds that He performed for them in Egypt. As soon as they knew this commandment in general terms, miracles and mighty deeds were performed for them.[6]

At the end of forty years, during which they engaged in all those commandments of Torah that Moses taught them—both those performed in the land and those performed outside the land—he then taught them in particular terms, as is written: *Know today and take to your heart* (Deuteronomy 4:39)—*today* precisely, what they were not permitted beforehand; *that YHVH is Elohim* (ibid.)—in particular terms. Countless mysteries and secrets inhere in this statement! This and the one preceding are entirely a single matter—that in general, this in particular.[7]

Now, you might say, "But look at what is written: *The awe of YHVH is the beginning of knowledge* (Proverbs 1:7)!" This refers to in particular terms: to know who *awe of YHVH* is. And even though a person must be in awe of Him before he knows, nevertheless here is written *beginning of knowledge*—to know Him; for this is the beginning of knowing Him in particular terms.[8]

So, the first commandment is to know the blessed Holy One in general and in particular, beginning and end. This is

the mystery of *I am the first and I am the last* (Isaiah 44:6). *I am the first*—in general; *and I am the last*—in particular. All is a single totality, one mystery.[9]

Once one knows this in general, he should perfect all his limbs. What are they? The 248 commandments, which are the 248 limbs of the human being! Once perfected thus in general, he should know in particular terms—total healing—knowing all the days of the year, which unite to bestow healing to all the limbs.[10]

Now, you might say, "How do all the days of the year bestow healing to all the limbs?" Certainly it is so, above and below! The year and its days bestow healing to all the limbs above. When the limbs pour down blessings to the days of the year, healing and life loom above them on high, and they are filled with all. Who brings this about? The days of the year! Similarly below: when a person perfects his body through the commandments of Torah, you cannot find a single day that does not come to be blessed through him; and when they are blessed through him, life and healing loom above him on high. Who brings this about? Those days of the year! Just as the days of the year are blessed from on high from the mystery [25b] of the human being, so are they blessed from below from the mystery of the human being.[11]

Happy are Israel in this world through these commandments of Torah, for they are called "human," as is written: *you are human* (Ezekiel 34:31)! You are called *human*, but the other nations are not called *human*. And because Israel are called *human* they must engage in the commandments of Torah, so that all will be one in the mystery of the *human*.[12]

When the blessed Holy One gave the Torah to Israel upon Mount Sinai, the first utterance was אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I am* (Exodus 20:2). *Anokhi* engenders many mysteries. Here it pertains to the mystery of the first commandment—to know Him in general. For it is written: *Anokhi, I am*—intimating

that there is a god, a supreme power over the world—the first commandment, in general. In particular—for it is written: *YHVH your God* (ibid.)—particular. *I am*—general; *YHVH your God*—particular; general and particular. The first commandment: one must know beginning and end, as we have established.[13]

[3:111b] The second commandment: to serve with all kinds of service in the Temple, and outside the Temple with all the rites called "service"—with prayer, striving after the commandments of Torah, for all is called "service"—like a servant striving after his master's needs.[14]

For Israel are called "servants," as is written: *For Mine are the Children of Israel as servants, they are My servants* (Leviticus 25:55). Why are they *servants*? For it is written: *whom I brought out of the land of Egypt* (ibid.). Accordingly, in the ten utterances, after *I am YHVH your God* (Exodus 20:2), it is written: *who brought you out of the land of Egypt* (ibid.)—to serve Him like a servant serving his master, who redeemed him from death, redeeming him from all the evils of the world.[15]

By these two [designations] are Israel called by the blessed Holy One: they are called "servants," as is written: *they are My servants*; and they are called בנים (*banim*), "children," as is written: *You are children of YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 14:1). When a person knows the blessed Holy One in general terms, he is called "servant," for he carries out his Master's command—but he is not permitted to search among His treasures and the mysteries of His house. When a person knows the blessed Holy One in particular terms, he is called בן (*ben*), "son," His beloved—like a son who searches among His treasures, among all the mysteries of His house.[16]

Even though he is called "son," firstborn of the blessed Holy One, as is said: *My son, My firstborn, is Israel* (Exodus 4:22), he must not remove himself from the category of

“servant”—serving his Father with all the rites that are the honor due his Father. So is required by every person: to be a son to his Father, searching among His treasures, to know the mysteries of His house, striving after them; and to be a servant to his Father.[17]

Mystery of the matter: there are two rungs above with which a person must be adorned; they are a mystery of faith, and they are one: One—mystery of servant; the other—mystery of son. This servant is called *lord of all the earth* (Joshua 3:11); the son, as we have established, *My son, My firstborn, is Israel;* all is a single mystery of faith. A person must be adorned with these rungs, to be enveloped in the mystery of faith.[18]

As servant—to serve with all kinds of service, with prayer called “service,” like this Servant—supernal mystery—never ever resting, but praising and singing always. This applies to other acts of service, for It performs and administers all the services and affairs of the worlds; and for this reason It is called *lord*—for It is a servant to serve, called *lord of all the earth*. A person who is adorned with this [112a] mystery—becoming a servant to serve the service of his Lord—ascends and is crowned, attaining this rung, and is also called “lord of all the earth”; for he effectuates blessings to this world through all those acts of service, sustaining it, and he is called “lord of all the earth” accordingly.[19]

Happy is the share of the son, striving to fathom his Father’s treasures and all the mysteries of His house; like an only child granted dominion by his father over all his treasures—honored, for he is in command of all! One who delves into wisdom to fathom the blessed Holy One and His treasures is called a son of the blessed Holy One. Among all the heavenly forces none hinders him whenever he needs to enter to his Father. Happy is his share in all worlds! Accordingly, when he strives to fathom Him in particular terms—in the mystery of wisdom—he is called “son.”[20]

In the service rendered by a person to the blessed Holy One, there is an act of service in which a person must incorporate both—being servant and son, to be adorned by the blessed Holy One. What is that? The service of prayer, in which a person must be servant and son, to be embraced by these supernal rungs: serving and arraying prayer in the mystery of the servant, performing the service of the restoration of worlds; and attaching his will to mysteries of wisdom, cleaving to his Lord through supernal mysteries in the mystery of the son; and all in a single totality. Happy is the share of the person who knows to adorn himself with supernal mysteries, as is fitting![21]

A son cleaves to his Father always, without any separation at all; none hinders him. A servant performs the service of his Master, arranging arrangements of the world. He who possesses both in one totality, in a single nexus, is the person who arrays the mystery of all faith in one entirety—without any separation at all, uniting all as one. This is the person about whom the blessed Holy One proclaims among all the legions and camps of all worlds, throughout all firmaments, "Show care for so-and-so, trustee of the palace! The mystery of the palace and the treasures of his Lord are in his hand!" Happy is he in this world, and happy is he in the world that is coming![22]

From that day on, that person is recognized and recorded in all worlds. Whenever he requires, all supernal legions and camps are mindful to be with him; and the blessed Holy desires none but him alone. A voice arouses, "It is fitting for the Unique to be with the unique; Unique engaging with unique!"[23]

We have found the mystery of these two rungs in one verse, as is written: *He said to me, "You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory*" (Isaiah 49:3). *He said to me, "You are My servant*—servant; *Israel*—son; for when they are a single totality, then is written *in whom I glory*.[24]

[2:134b] The third commandment: to study Torah every day, for it is a supernal mystery, to know the ways of the blessed Holy One. For whoever delves into Torah attains this world and the world that is coming, and is delivered from all maleficent accusations. Because Torah is a mystery of faith—for whoever engages with her engages in supernal faith; and the blessed Holy One ensconces His *Shekhinah* within him, irremovably.[25]

One must pursue whoever knows a word of Torah—to learn that matter from him, fulfilling the mystery of what is written: *From every man whose heart impels him, you shall take My offering* (Exodus 25:2). Torah is the Tree of Life, bestowing life on all. Whoever grasps Torah grasps the Tree of Life, as is said: *She is a tree of life to those who grasp her* (Proverbs 3:18).[26]

How many supernal mysteries have we established concerning one who delves into Torah?! For he merits to unite with Torah above! In this world he does not rest, nor does he rest in the world that is coming! Even in the grave his lips are astir with Torah, as is said: *stirring the lips of sleepers* (Song of Songs 7:10)![27]

[3:263a] The fourth commandment: to unify the name of the blessed Holy One every day—for just as they unify the name of the blessed Holy One below, so is His name unified above. Consequently, the blessed Holy One is one and only—above and below.[28]

One who unifies the name of the blessed Holy One should set his heart and will upon the unification we have mentioned, joining all his limbs in that unification through that will, so that they all become one. Just as he directs all his limbs in the mystery of one, so on high he conjoins all supernal limbs through that unification, so that all of them become one.[29]

The moment a person comes to unify the name of the blessed Holy One, all the hosts of heaven stand ready, row

after row, so that all of them will be arrayed and included in that unification—to abide in the mystery of one in a single unification—all of them arrayed in adornments, as is fitting.

At that time, an ordained attendant rises, stationed beneath 248 worlds (all of them called "limbs of the body") called הלניו (*Heleniu*), poised and waiting in that unification. This is the gatherer of roses, as is said: *and to gather roses* (Song of Songs 6:2)—the limbs of the body. The Supreme Name gathers the supernal limbs through the mystery of unification effectuated through the mystery of the forty-two names, gathering all those supernal roses; whereas this attendant gathers all those below, all of them designated in the totality of the seventy-two names. All of them are gathered in that unification, all of them becoming one body, in a single mystery. That unification ascends, unifying all in two aspects, in a single union. At that time all the limbs are gathered and conjoin in a single nexus, so that all will be in the mystery of one, above and below—in the mystery of *YHVH is one and His name one* (Zechariah 14:9).[30]

This is the reason we prolong two letters during אחד (*eḥad*), *one*—to gather roses; uniting through the mystery of *one* in consummate union. Once all limbs are united in a single mystery of single union, the whole is called a "complete offering." Based on this mystery the blessed Holy One placed Adam in the Garden of Eden, as is written: לעבדה ולשמרה (*le-ovdah ul-shomrah*), *to till it and tend it* (Genesis 2:15); and we have learned that these are two offerings—mystery of *YHVH is one and His name one*. Regarding these offerings is written *and to gather roses*—for the blessed Holy One gathers the roses, gathering all those limbs above and below, joining them in a single union, through that unification we have mentioned. Thus arouses the one who arouses: *to gather roses*—the limbs of the two aspects that are one.[31]

Roses—it is a mystery. For when all those limbs conjoin as one, all abiding in single union—mystery of the offering—

the blessed Holy One is adorned with His crowns, with a head of finest gold, gloriously adorned. This is the mystery of what is written: שׁשׁנים (*shoshannim*), *roses*—mystery of all those limbs above and below; mystery of that פז (*paz*), gold—crown crowning, ascending from among them; all is within it.[32]

In these roses inhere 613 commandments—limbs of two aspects, mystery of *YHVH is one and His name one* [263b]—and ascension of that gold ascending from among them. Wherever they appear, that supernal ascension manifests, ascending from among them. This is the mystery: *an apple tree among the trees of the forest* (Song of Songs 2:3) and *a rose among thorns* (ibid., 2). This and that must ascend together in consummate union. Happy is one who offers these offerings! Certainly favorable in this world and in the world that is coming![33]

The fifth commandment: to be in awe—in general terms and in particular terms. We have already established awe; for it is incumbent on a person to be in awe of the blessed Holy One constantly, and on account of awe guard one's ways.[34]

Awe—there is a site called awe, as is said: *to be in awe of this honored and awesome Name, YHVH, your God* (Deuteronomy 28:58), where the awe of the blessed Holy One inheres—actual awe—to be held in awe; and this is the mystery of what is written: *My sanctuary you are to hold in awe* (Leviticus 19:30 and 26:2). In this awe abides the lash of fire to whip the wicked, who do not observe the commandments of Torah. So, one must be in awe—in general terms.[35]

Afterward—in particular terms; when a person knows who *awe of YHVH* is. This is awe of love, the essence and foundation of loving the blessed Holy One. Such awe leads one to observe all the commandments of Torah, so that a person becomes a faithful servant of the blessed Holy One, as is fitting. We have established awe.[36]

The sixth commandment: to love. We have already established the love of the blessed Holy One—that a person must love Him with abounding love; like Abraham, who loved the blessed Holy One with immense love, surrendering his body and soul to Him.[37]

From here we learn that one who loves the blessed Holy One sustains ten utterances, above and below. Hence, all those ten trials by which Abraham was tried, prevailing in all of them, all correspond to ten utterances—each trial an utterance; he was tried by that utterance and prevailed.[38]

Hence, those ten trials; Abraham prevailed in all of them, because he attached and cleaved to the right hand of the blessed Holy One—Great Love. Why is it called Great Love? For one who attains this love is bound to a higher world. Eternal Love is the mystery of the lower world—without division—to which his love is bound. All is one mystery. The mystery of love has been discussed.[39]

This love transcends all the rites of the world; by this is the name of the blessed Holy One glorified and blessed more than all else! Blessed is He forever and ever! The mystery of love has been discussed.[40]

[3:174b] The seventh commandment: *tzitzit*. This is the commandment by virtue of which one remembers all the commandments of Torah, as is said: *You will see it and remember all of YHVH's commandments and do them* (Numbers 15:39)—sign of the King, to remember and do.[41]

It is written: *You shall make* ציץ (*tsits*), *a medallion, of gold* (Exodus 28:36). We have established the mystery of the medallion—adorning the High Priest; *tsits, medallion*, upon which eyes gaze—sign of higher world with which the High Priest is adorned. Consequently, the mere sight of it atones for a brazen face; for only faces of truth can stand before it; mystery of all those supernal faces—faces [175a] of truth, truthful countenances—comprised in the truth of Jacob.[42]

Tzitzit is female—mystery of lower world, gazing to remember. *Tsits*—male; *tzitzit*—female; this for everyone, *tsits* for the priest.[43]

We have learned: It is forbidden to gaze upon *Shekhinah*; hence the blue [thread], for the blue is a throne for the house of David, its adornment. This pertains to awe of *YHVH*, to be in awe of that site. Therefore, *You will see it and remember all of YHVH's commandments*. This is the throne where capital cases are judged. As they have established: in a dream all colors bode well, except blue—the throne that arraigns capital cases.[44]

It is written: *they shall place on the tassel of the hem a thread of blue* (Numbers 15:38). It is not written *they shall place on the hem*, but rather *they shall place on the tassel*—covering the other threads.[45]

You will see it and remember (Numbers 15:39); and it is written: *Remember what Amalek did to you* (Deuteronomy 25:17). What is the connection? Well, it is like a son who breached a fence and was bitten by a dog. Whenever his father wished to rebuke his son he would say, "Remember when the dog bit you!" Similarly here, *You will see it and remember*—for this is the site where souls ascend to be judged. In a similar vein, *and so then, whoever is bitten will see it and live* (Numbers 21:8). Why? Well, when he raised his eyes and beheld the image of that which bit him, he became frightened and prayed to the blessed Holy One, and understood that it was punishment for the wicked. As long as the son sees his father's strap, he is afraid of his father—spared the strap, saved from all! What caused him to be saved? Seeing the strap with his own eyes; the strap causes him to be saved! Hence, *will see it and live*—he sees the strap that lashed him and it causes him to be saved. Similarly here: *You will see it and remember* [...] *and do* (Numbers 15:39). *And do*—surely. If not—the strap! It will cause you to return to My service, permanently. Then—*and you will do*! *And you shall not stray after your heart*

(Numbers 15:39)—[the *tzitzit*] will prevent you from other evil paths. Certainly *you shall not stray* and will not perpetrate evil! That is why the color blue stands out. Blue resembles the Throne of Glory. Just as the Throne of Glory causes a person to follow the straight path, purifying him, similarly this blue causes a person to follow the straight path. Surely all must be in awe of this site, walking uprightly![46]

It is written: *From the corner of the earth we have heard songs: "Glory to the righteous!" But I say,* "רזי לי רזי לי (*razi li razi li*), *I waste away; I waste away! Woe is me! The treacherous deal treacherously; the treacherous deal very treacherously!"* (Isaiah 24:16). מכנף הארץ (*Mi-kenaf ha-arets*), *From the corner of the earth*—כנף דציצית (*kanaf de-tsitsit*), the corner of the tassels, which is the corner of the earth. *We have heard songs*—the other threads emerging and suspended from a supernal place, through sublime paths emanating from supernal Wisdom. *"Glory to the righteous!"*—Righteous One, Vitality of the Worlds, for those threads constitute His beauty, for they proceed from Him; each thread comprised of two aspects. When I contemplated, I said, "רזי לי רזי לי (*Razi li, razi li*), *I have my mystery, I have my mystery,*" for they hail from within the supernal mystery of the entirety of faith. When I contemplated the blue and saw the strap for lashing—the site of awe, to be held in awe—I said, *"Woe is me!"*—for people do not know to consider and ponder why they are punished, being deceitful in this matter. *The treacherous deal treacherously*—for they recite the *Shema* without *tzitzit*, bearing false witness. These are the treacherous who deal treacherously—deceiving themselves. ובגד בוגדים בגדו (*U-veged bogedim bagadu*), *The treacherous deal very treacherously*—their garment without tassels is called בגד בוגדים (*beged bogedim*), "garment of the treacherous," the garment of those treacherous who deal treacherously, for they are deceitful and bear false witness every day. Woe to them,

woe to their souls! For they are arraigned by that throne of blue to be judged, and of them is written *A speaker of lies will not endure My eyes* (Psalms 101:7). Their garment is recognized by all masters of judgment. Woe to them, for they do not have a share in the world that is coming! Happy are the righteous whose garments and adornments are recognized on high, benefitting them in this world and in the world that is coming![47]

[2:43a] The eighth commandment: *tefillin*. This commandment is classified differently, and is not called "commandment" but rather "holiness"—namely *tefillin*: *tefillah* of the hand, and *tefillah* of the head; adornment of glory, beauty of supernal colors. Accordingly, they are called טוטפות (*totafot*), circlets, as is said: *Israel in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3).[48]

It is written: *When Israel was a youth, I loved him* (Hosea 11:1)—Israel the Junior; Israel the Elder—beauty of colors, above and below. Joseph ascended and was crowned with two rungs; at first—youth; ultimately—righteous. How sublime to behold the colors within him! The mystery is: *Joseph was beautiful in form and beautiful in appearance* (Genesis 39:6)—beautiful in two aspects, above and below.[49]

It is written: *Do what is upright and good* (Deuteronomy 6:18). *What is upright*—*tefillah* of the hand, joining it to the *tefillin* of the head, to unite as one. The *tefillah* of the hand precedes the *tefillah* of the head; there must be no separation between them at all.[50]

One who is adorned in *tefillin* abides in the mystery of the supernal pattern; abiding in the two mysteries we mentioned—like Joseph, who is called "youth" and "righteous"; in the mystery of the faithful servant, and in the mystery of the only son. This is the significance of the *tefillah* of the hand and the *tefillah* of the head; comprising a single totality, without division.[51]

In the *tefillin* of the head, the four portions of the *tefillin* are in four compartments; and just as there are four portions in the *tefillin* of the head, so all of them are in the *tefillin* of the hand, though in a single compartment—for the *tefillah* of the hand has nothing at all of its own other than what it receives from above. The mystery is: *All the streams flow into the sea* (Ecclesiastes 1:7). Because She receives them, She is called *tefillah*, and She is made holy by their holiness; the entirety is called holiness. Then She is called Consummate Kingdom of Heaven.[52]

As for the four portions—we have already established their mystery in numerous places. But, the first portion: *Hallow to Me every firstborn* (Exodus 13:1–10) is a supernal [43b] mystery, comprising all four compartments, through the mystery of the sublime radiance emanating from Nothingness; all four are intimated here.[53]

קדש (*Qaddesh*), *Hallow*—supernal holiness, mystery of supernal חכמתא (*Ḥokhmata*), Wisdom, from where all is sanctified through the mystery of the supernal concealment, called *Qodesh, Holy*. לי (*Li*), *To me—Binah*, Understanding, mystery of the higher world, innermost palace. The mystery is: *For* לי (*li*), *Mine, are the Children of Israel as servants* (Leviticus 25:55); *For* לי (*li*), *Mine, is every firstborn* (Numbers 3:13); *you shall be* לי (*li*), *for Me, a treasure* (Exodus 19:5). כל (*Kol*), *Every*—mystery of Love, in all instances, whether above or below. בכור (*Bekhor*), *Firstborn*—firstborn son, as is written: *My son, my firstborn, is Israel* (ibid. 4:22); this firstborn son comprises all aspects, all hues. Hence, the verse includes all four in the mystery of supernal Wisdom. This is in general terms—to know that all is comprised within; but in particular terms, this is the first portion—which includes all the other portions.[54]

The second portion: *It shall be when* [*YHVH*] *brings you* [*to the land*…] (Exodus 13:11–16)—*Binah*, Understanding; for the exodus from Egypt is in this portion, which hailed from the aspect of Jubilee. So, it begins with והיה (*ve-hayah*), *It*

shall be—for this word pertains to Jubilee, and thus Her name is והיה (*ve-hayah*); for הויה (*havayah*), being, pertains solely to this realm, poised to extend below, to illumine lamps, and manifest in the lowest rung. והיה (*Ve-hayah*), *It shall be*—like one who says about the King that He is poised to extend below, to illumine lamps; all is in a single mystery. Because it abides in a concealed manner, it is not called openly by this name—but has been transmitted to the wise to fathom. So, this matter is inscribed by this holy name.[55]

The third portion: *Hear* (Deuteronomy 6:4–9)—mystery of the right, called Supreme Love, enacting unification of all to four sides; the blessed Holy One configuring thereby the configuration of the entire world; expanding through all realms, even within lowest abysses. With this the blessed Holy One created the world when He enwrapped Himself in a wrapping of radiance. This is what enacts unification. Accordingly, *Hear* is adjacent to *It shall be*.[56]

The daily unification is a unification to be fathomed, to deploy one's will. We have discussed this unification in numerous places. The daily unification is the unification of the verse: first *YHVH, our God, YHVH* (Deuteronomy 6:4). They are all one; hence He is designated *one* (ibid.). But look, there are three names! How are they one? Even though we proclaim "one," why are they one?[57]

Well, through the vision of the holy-spirit it becomes known; in the vision of the eye—to comprehend that these three are one. This is the mystery of the audible voice. Voice is singular, yet comprised of three aspects: fire, air, and water—all of them one in the mystery of voice, solely one. Similarly here, *YHVH, our God, YHVH*—they are one; three colors that are one. This is the voice that a person produces, deploying [his will] in the unification of all, from Infinity to the end of all—in this voice that he makes with these three that are one. This is the significance of the daily unification revealed through the mystery of the holy-spirit.[58]

Many nuances of unification have been aroused, and all of them are true. One who enacts this effectuates; and one who enacts that effectuates. But this unification that we arouse from below through the mystery of the singular voice that is one is the clarification of the matter. This is in general.[59]

Afterward, *It shall be, if you indeed heed* (Deuteronomy 11:13–21)—the particular of Supreme Judgment, as we have mentioned; this is the fourth portion—mystery of strict judgment: *Watch yourselves* (ibid., 16).[60]

A person must don them every day, abiding in the supernal image. Of this is written *All the peoples of the earth shall see that the name of YHVH is proclaimed upon you*, [*and they shall be in awe of you*] (ibid. 28:10)—this refers to the *tefillin* of the head; of the arm in a similar vein. We have already aroused [our awareness about] them, and they are all one.[61]

The knot of the *tefillin* of the head is a ד (*dalet*); and of this written *You will see My back* (Exodus 33:23)—so, it is behind. There, all is bound in a single bond. When She dons the *tefillin* of the arm, another is bound—mystery of holy covenant. This mystery is as explained in numerous places, and all is a single mystery.[62]

[3:93a] The ninth commandment: to sanctify Him every day, raising His holiness from below above, just as He is sanctified on high, so that His holiness ascends to the Fathers and Sons. The mystery is: *I will be sanctified in the midst of the Children of Israel* (Leviticus 22:32)—above and below: above—through three rungs; below—through three rungs.[63]

We have already established the קדושה (*Qedushah*), Sanctification, in numerous places. But, just as there is *qedushah* above, transcending all, so there is *qedushah* in the middle and *qedushah* below—all in the mystery of three:

qedushah above, beyond—in a single mystery; *qedushah* in the middle; and below—three rungs that are one.[64]

קדש (*Qodesh*)—supernal realm, located at the beginning of all rungs. Even though it is a concealed realm—called *qodesh*—from there an expansion expands through one narrow, hidden channel, illumining the center. Once it illuminates the center, a ו (*vav*) is inscribed, shining in that קדש (*qodesh*). From this radiance expands an expansion below—end of all rungs. Once the end is illuminated, a ה (*he*) is inscribed in the radiance, and it is called קדושה (*qedushah*), as we have established.[65]

Now, concerning the proclamation: קדוש קדוש קדוש (*qadosh, qadosh, qadosh*), holy, holy, holy—it ought to have been קדש (*qodesh*), mystery of the beginning of all, since it manifests from there! If so, why is above designated קדוש (*qadosh*)—where ו (*vav*) does not pertain?[66]

Well, the mystery is as follows: Surely Israel sanctify below matching the celestial angels on high, about whom is written *One called to another, saying, 'Qadosh*, [*qadosh, qadosh*]' (Isaiah 6:3). When Israel sanctify, they elevate the supernal glory from below above, so that ו (*vav*)—mystery of supernal Heaven—ascends on high. Once Heaven has ascended on high, that קדש (*qodesh*) illumines thereby, and then above is designated קדוש (*qadosh*). Afterward, that supernal radiance shines upon the throne that is Heaven; and Heaven returns to its site, settling with that radiance—whereupon it is designated קדוש (*qadosh*). Afterward, that radiance descends until a certain supernal Righteous One—a precious rung—receives all, to sanctify all below. When it receives all, it is called קדוש (*qadosh*). This is the entire mystery.[67]

One who sets his aspiration upon this does well; and one who sets his aspiration upon the three rungs of the Fathers in a single totality, unifying them through this sanctification (if he is unable to focus his will any more) does well. The whole [purpose] is to draw down some holiness from above below, that everyone may sanctify

himself with this holiness—absorbing it, spreading a spread of holiness upon him. The mystery is: *I will be sanctified in the midst of the Children of Israel* (Leviticus 22:32)—at first; afterward: *I am YHVH, who sanctifies you* (ibid.).[68]

At what point should a person sanctify himself during this sanctification, including himself within? When a person reaches the holy name *YHVH of Hosts* (Isaiah 6:3); and this is the mystery of *I am YHVH, who sanctifies you*. This is what we have found in the mystery of the books of the ancients. But we do not do that. Rather, after *YHVH of Hosts*—on its own at first. Afterward, when a person reaches *The whole earth is full of His glory* (Isaiah 6:3), he should incorporate himself in that holiness—to be sanctified below through that glory below. The mystery is: *sanctified by My glory* (Exodus 29:43). Afterward, he should enact in particular, so that all will be sanctified, just as we do, לעומתם (*le'ummatam*), corresponding to, the celestial angels who chant *Blessed be the glory of YHVH from His place* (Ezekiel 3:12)—supernal glory; and afterward *YHVH will be king forever…* (Psalms 146:10)—lower glory.[69]

In the Book of Rav Yeisa Sava: *Holy, holy, holy*—holiness to sanctify Written Torah in a single totality; afterward, *Facing them* […] *Blessed be the glory of YHVH*—the prophets; and afterward, *YHVH will be king forever*. This is the mystery: in this sanctification we require that holiness, blessing, and kingdom be manifest there, so that all become one. Holiness, as is said: *Holy… ;* Blessing: *Blessed be the glory of YHVH from His place*; Kingdom: *YHVH will be king forever*. So, we must perfect the whole; and upon this a person should direct and set his aspiration every day.[70]

[3:263b] The tenth commandment: to recite the *Shema* twice daily; once corresponding to the rung of day, and once corresponding to the rung of night—merging the rung of night in day, blending the rung of day in night. This has

already been discussed. Accordingly, twice every day: once in the day, and once at night.[71]

The eleventh commandment: *mezuzah*. A person must affix a *mezuzah* to his gate, so that every person will be protected by the blessed Holy One when he leaves and when he enters. This is the mystery: *YHVH will guard your going and your coming, now and forever* (Psalms 121:8)—for the mystery of *mezuzah* is constantly positioned by the entrance—the entrance above, the rung called שומר (*Shomer*), Guard—looming. For a person's sole protection is the protection of the blessed Holy One, who is always protecting and stationed by the entrance, and the person is within.[72]

Furthermore, so that a person will never forget the remembrance of the blessed Holy One, just like with *tzitzit*, as is said: *You will see it and remember*… (Numbers 15:39). As soon as a person sees this reminder, he himself remembers to perform the commandment of his Lord. Mystery of faith: מזוזה, *mezuzah*—totality of male and female as one.[73]

In the Book of Solomon: Next to the entrance, opposite the two rungs, a demon stands poised, empowered to destroy—he is stationed on the left side. A person raises his eyes, sees the mystery of the name of his Lord, and recalls Him—and he is unable to inflict harm.[74]

Now, you might say, "If so, when a person ventures out of his gate, then that demon is situated on his right and the *mezuzah* on his left—how can a person be protected if it is located on the left?!"[75]

Well, everything made by the blessed Holy One, every single thing, is drawn after its own kind. Two degrees inhere in the human being correspondingly: one on the right, and one on the left. The one on the right is called the good impulse, and the one on the left is called the evil impulse. As a person ventures from the gate of his house, the demon raises his eyes and sees the evil impulse looming

on the left. He is drawn to that side and withdraws from the right. On that side is located the name of his Lord, and he is unable to approach him and harm him; the person departs [264a] and is saved from him. When he enters, the holy name is located on his right and he is unable to harass him.[76]

Hence, a person must not place filth and dirt by the gate of his house, or pour out foul waters; first that he not show disdain for the name of his Lord; and second, for that destroyer is then empowered to destroy. Accordingly, a person should be careful about this, and careful not to withhold the name of his Lord from the gate of his house.[77]

When a person installs a *mezuzah* on his doorway, then when he enters, the evil impulse and that demon protect him against their will, reciting *This is the gate to YHVH; the righteous shall enter through it* (Psalms 118:20). When a *mezuzah* is absent from a person's doorway, the evil impulse and that demon are primed as one; when he enters, they place their hands upon his head and open and say, "Woe to so-and-so, who has departed from the domain of his Lord!" From that time he abides without protection, with no one to guard him. May the Merciful One save us![78]

[2:91b] The twelfth commandment: to swear by His name truthfully. One who swears שבועה (*shevu'ah*), an oath, includes himself in the שבע (*sheva*), seven, supernal rungs by which the name of the blessed Holy One is comprised. But look, they are six! The person who swears an oath of truth includes himself with them; and he constitutes שביעאה (*shevia'ah*), the seventh—sustaining the holy name in its place. So, it is written: *and by His name* תשבע (*tishave'a*), *you shall swear* (Deuteronomy 6:13). One who swears an oath in vain, deceitfully, prevents that site from enduring in its place.[79]

When the evil impulse assails a person—seducing him to transgress his Lord's command—an oath to fulfill the

Lord's commandment is an oath of truth. This is the oath in which the Lord takes pride; and that is why a person must swear by his Lord—it is His praise, the blessed Holy takes pride in it! Like Boaz, as is written: *As YHVH lives! Lie down until morning* (Ruth 3:13)—for the evil impulse was inciting him, and because of this he swore.[80]

Vow is higher: Life of the King, mystery of 248 limbs and 12 joints, equivalent to נדר (*neder*), vow; accordingly it is graver than an oath. Life of the King—bestowing life to all these limbs, called thus because this life descends from on high below, to the source of life, and from that source cascades below to all the limbs.[81]

Oath—to sustain the rung below, mystery of the holy name; called "the King himself," as supernal spirit resides within the body. "Himself"—that which is concealed above. Accordingly, one who swears [an oath] in truth sustains that site; and when that site is sustained, it sustains the entire world. Vow applies to everything—to commandments, and to optional acts—which is not the case with an oath. So have the Companions established.[82]

[1:264b] The thirteenth commandment: to be fruitful and multiply in this world, generating offspring, spreading the holy name in all facets, assembling spirits and souls—so that the glory of the blessed Holy One might be above and below.[83]

For whoever does not engage in being fruitful and multiplying diminishes the image of his Lord—which vanishes from this world and prevents *Shekhinah* from dwelling in this world. Just as spirits and souls are added, so the radiant glory of the King is augmented to descend into this world, as is written: *In a multitude of people is the glory of a king, and in the lack of people is the ruin of a prince* (Proverbs 14:28).[84]

Glory of a king—radiant glory of the King, augmented to descend into this world. *The ruin of a prince*—diminution of

the image of the King [265a], diminished from this world and likewise diminished above. For the radiance does not descend; and that person is considered as if he sheds blood, for he lessens the image below, resembling above—as is written: *For in the image of God He made the human being* (Genesis 9:6), and he diminishes the image of God below, and the form and image above. That is why a person must be fruitful and multiply—to actualize the image of God, increasing the glory of *YHVH* in all realms.[85]

[3:43b] The fourteenth commandment: to circumcise on the eighth day. Circumcision of the holy covenant is a supernal mystery, as is written: *The secret of YHVH is for those in awe of Him; to them He reveals His covenant* (Psalms 25:14). To whom? To *those in awe of Him*—those dreading sin, for it is not seemly to reveal the mystery of the holy covenant other than to them. The mystery of the holy covenant has already been established and explained in numerous places.[86]

This mystery "on the eighth day" is an obligation upon the world for the entire Holy People, as is written: *On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised* (Leviticus 12:3). *The eighth day*—sign of the holy covenant, eighth of all rungs; and the circumcision of that covenant is to remove the foreskin [44a] from the Covenant.[87]

For at that time when the Holy People assemble to remove the foreskin from the covenant, the blessed Holy One assembles His entire retinue, reveals Himself, and casts aside that foreskin on high from the holy enduring Covenant. For all the actions performed by Israel below stimulate an action on high—and at that time, foreskin is cast aside from the Holy People above.[88]

A vessel with dust is prepared for that foreskin, to place it within—in the mystery of what is written: *and the serpent's food shall be dust* (Isaiah 65:25); *dust shall you eat all the days of your life* (Genesis 3:14). Hence, one must not treat that site with disdain, even though it is removed

from this covenant. Once removed from this covenant, its place is dust—for after that serpent was removed from Adam's presence, the blessed Holy One established its abode in the dust, as is written: *dust shall you eat all the days of your life*. Since the blessed Holy One established and arrayed its abode in the dust when He removed it from Adam, so in precisely the same way, when the foreskin is removed, must we prepare dust for it as its abode.[89]

Every person must joyously bring his son as an offering to the blessed Holy One—with a willing heart, inducting him beneath the wings of *Shekhinah*; and he is reckoned by the blessed Holy One as a perfect offering, received favorably.[90]

This offering resembles the animal offering: this on the eighth day, and that on the eighth day, as is written: *and from the eighth day onward it is acceptable* (Leviticus 22:27). What makes it acceptable? One Sabbath has passed over it. As soon as one Sabbath has passed over it, it is acceptable: this as an offering, and that as an offering. Why? Because it attains and encounters Sabbath—mystery of Holy Covenant. So, all is in supernal mystery.[91]

[3:277b] The fifteenth commandment: a groom must delight with his wife for one year, as is written: *He shall be exempt in his house for one year* (Deuteronomy 24:5). Those twelve months are Hers, for year is Bride—and there is no Bride without twelve months, as is written: *standing upon twelve oxen* (1 Kings 7:25). Since there is no arraying of the Bride other than with twelve, the groom must delight her and her house—her and her adornments, corresponding to the supernal pattern. Accordingly it is written of Jacob: *he took of the stones of the place* (Genesis 28:11)—the stones of the place were twelve. One who delights the Bride delights Her maidens [278a]—Her maidens are twelve. All is the mystery of year, and that is why the groom must delight with his wife for one year.[92]

We have already established that this delight is not his, but hers, as is written: *and delight his wife* (Deuteronomy

24:5). It is not written *and be delighted with his wife*, but rather *and delight*—he delights the bride. Correspondingly, the Bride's only joy is the entire body and Her adornments. Who delights them? Righteous One. Therefore: נקי (*Naqi*), *Exempt, shall he be in his house* (ibid.). נקי (*Naqi*), *Free*—not toiling in worldly affairs, so that he will have desire to delight her. Totally free! Free from excises, levies, and poll taxes; free from going out to the army to wage war—so that there should be joy above and below, arousing joy on high. Happy are the Holy People, for their Lord delights in them! Happy are they in this world and happy are they in the world that is coming![93]

The sixteenth commandment: a person must walk in the ways of the blessed Holy One, as is written: *and walk in His ways* (Deuteronomy 28:9)—to learn His ways: just as He is holy, likewise the human being; just as He is compassionate, likewise the human being—not straying from His ways to the right or left. So, it is written: *In all your ways know Him…* (Proverbs 3:6). *In all your ways*—in all the ways you act in this world; *know Him*—the blessed Holy One, learning His ways, and act in accordance with them. Then—*He will make your ways smooth* (ibid.). A person must learn those ways and not deviate from them. When he actualizes all that he can accomplish in those ways, he inherits two worlds—this world and the world that is coming.[94]

[3:85b] The seventeenth commandment: to reprove one who sins, thereby showing him the great love he bears him, so that he himself will not be punished. Concerning the blessed Holy One it is written: *For the one whom YHVH loves He reproves* (Proverbs 3:12). Since the blessed Holy One acts thus—reproving the one He loves—a person should learn from this way, and reprove his companion.[95]

How does the blessed Holy One reprove a person? He reproves him lovingly, secretly. If he receives—fine. If not,

He reproves him among his intimates. If he receives—fine. If not, He reproves him openly, in the eyes of all. If he receives—fine. If not, He dismisses him and does not reprove him, leaving [86a] him to go and do as he pleases.[96]

At first, He admonishes him secretly, reproving him and prodding him without anyone knowing. This is between the two of them. If he receives—fine. If not, He admonishes him among his intimates. (In the era of the High Priest, [the blessed Holy One] would afflict one with illnesses until bedridden; and the intimate friends of the blessed Holy One would come and admonish him, that if he be guilty of some sin he should repent and scrutinize his deeds.) If he receives—fine. If not, He reproves him openly—through his wealth, his children—so that all whisper about him and visit him. If he receives—fine. If not, His Lord dismisses him to do as he wishes, and He never constrains him.[97]

Correspondingly, a person must reprove his companion: at first—secretly; then—among his intimates; afterward—openly. From then on—leave him be and let him do as he pleases. So, it is written: הוכח תוכיח (*Hokheaḥ tokhiaḥ*), *You shall surely reprove* (Leviticus 19:17). הוכח (*Hokheaḥ*), *You shall reprove*—secretly, without anyone knowing; תוכיח (*tokhiaḥ*), *indeed reprove*—among his friends and intimates; *your fellow* (ibid.)—openly. That is why the verse does not say at first תוכיח (*tokhiaḥ*), but rather הוכח (*hokheaḥ*).[98]

Furthermore, הוכח תוכיח (*Hokheaḥ tokhiaḥ*)—if he is the kind of a person who will be ashamed, neither tell him nor reprove him, even secretly. Rather, speak in his presence as one who is discussing other matters; and in the course of those matters mention ‘one who has performed this sin, such-and-such [is his punishment]’—so that he will realize by himself and forsake that sin. So, *hokheaḥ, You shall reprove*; and if not, *tokhiaḥ, indeed reprove*; and finally, *your fellow*—openly. From then on: *do not raise sin upon him* (ibid.).[99]

Alternatively, *do not raise sin upon him* (ibid.). When a person reproves his companion and has occasion to reprove him openly, he must not raise in his presence the specific sin he did—which is surely forbidden. Rather, he should speak in general terms, and not raise that sin over him openly, and not inscribe the sin upon him; for the blessed Holy One cares for a person's honor—even the wicked.[100]

[3:270b] The eighteenth commandment: to bless the blessed Holy One for everything one eats, drinks, and enjoys in this world. If one does not bless, he is called a robber of the blessed Holy One, as is written: *He who robs his father and mother* (Proverbs 28:24), as the Companions have established. For the blessings that a person blesses the blessed Holy One are in order to draw life from the Source of Life to the holy Name, pouring over it some supernal oil, so as to stream from there to the whole world. It is written: *You shall eat and be satisfied and bless YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 8:10) [271a]. Through these words a person pours blessings from that supernal source, and all rungs and sources are blessed and filled to pour down upon all worlds—and they are all blessed as one.[101]

So, a person must set his intention in the mystery of blessings so that Fathers and Sons will be blessed, all as one. One who blesses the blessed Holy One will himself be blessed—and is first to receive his share of those blessings of the whole world below. Once the Name of the blessed Holy One is blessed, from there the first share descends and alights upon his head. As we have established, as is written: *In every place that* אזכיר את שמי (*azkir et shmi*), *I make My name invoked, I will come to you and bless you* (Exodus 20:21). *Azkir*, as is said: יזכר (*Yizkor*), *May He recall, all your grain offerings* (Psalms 20:4). Once that blessing comes and alights upon his head, from there it disseminates throughout the entire world.[102]

When those blessings descend, they are enwreathed in the Orchard of Holy Apples; and countless rungs empowered in the world encounter them, and descend with them, saying and proclaiming, “This is the gift that so-and-so sent to the blessed Holy One!”[103]

From which site do they descend? Afterward, from a certain head of the Righteous One. They ascend there, arousing others to descend from on high; and He is filled from above and below, as is written: *Blessings upon the head of the righteous one* (Proverbs 10:6). As soon as that rung is filled, it pours down upon the Bride, from where they stream and flow below.[104]

When those blessings ascend from below, there is not a single opening above—nor a prince on high—who does not open all those openings, proclaiming and saying throughout all the firmaments, “This is the gift of the King that so-and-so sent! This gift is consummate, as is fitting!” Which is that? A blessing to which has been responded “Amen”; for every blessing to which has been responded “Amen” is consummate, fittingly![105]

As soon as that blessing ascends, all the rungs on high are poised toward the light that does not shine, to illuminate Her. All the more so if it is a blessing blessed by a congregation—and crowned with holy crowns through the mystery of “Amen.” “Amen” is the mystery of the bonds of all unification and holiness, in the mystery of one’s Lord, adorning that blessing with supernal crowns, as is fitting.[106]

The blessed Holy One delights in those who bless Him; His desire is for blessing from below. For that blessing ascends and illuminates the lamp that does not shine, invigorating Her with potent power to ascend above. Of this mystery is written *For those who honor Me I will honor* (1 Samuel 2:30)—those who bless the blessed Holy One; *and those who spurn Me will be disdained* (ibid.)—those who do

not bless the blessed Holy One, withholding blessing from their mouths.[107]

Mystery of mysteries for those who fathom the wisdom of their Lord—to understand the mystery of the blessings of the commandments of Torah, and all the pleasures and delights of this world: to shower blessings from above below—the blessings of prayer notwithstanding, which involve the configuration of the Lord from below above, and from above below.[108]

Non-prayer blessings ascend from below above until they reach the light that does not shine, potently arousing on high that light that does not shine through that blessing. Arousal ascends higher, until they reach the supernal throne—source of all life—whereupon other blessings issue from that supernal source; and they encounter each other, kiss one another, and come to settle upon the head of the Righteous One, to pour forth below. As they descend, Fathers and Sons are blessed and all their lights.[109]

The mystery of these blessings—arousing from above below through this mystery:

"ברוך (*Barukh*), Blessed"—mystery of the most supernal source of all, pouring, streaming, and illumining all lamps; always blessed, for its waters never cease. From there—beginning, called the World that is Coming, End of Heaven, for that end is the uppermost end. For there is a corresponding end below—lower world, also called Blessed in relation to those beneath, pouring below, rousing from below above through the blessings of prayer. The first Blessed is so called through the mystery of upper wisdom, filling that site through a single slender path it inserts within.[110]

"אתה (*Attah*), You"—after manifestation begins. For this Blessed is concealed, and is designated accordingly in a concealed fashion: Blessed—supernal source, unrevealed. You—beginning to be revealed externally, and so it is called You. Who is that? Mystery of the right; called Priest in

relation to that site. The mystery is: אתה כהן לעולם (*Attah kohen le-olam*), *You are a priest forever* (Psalms 110:4). Who is the priest of that עולם (*olam*), world? *Attah*, You—the supernal right hand, manifesting to be revealed.[111]

"יהוה (*YHVH*)"—mystery of the center, mystery of faith in all sides.[112] [271b]

"אלהינו (*Eloheinu*), Our God"—the left side, comprised in the right, the right within, merging together, becoming one.[113]

Until here are blessings bound. As soon as these are blessed, all below are blessed.[114]

After they are blessed, obtaining blessings for themselves, they return—merged as one—to that source; for they are unable to return to that source until they are blessed. Once they are blessed at first, they return and enter that site, obtaining other additional blessings to pour forth below. Until they are blessed, they do not enter and do not return. The mystery is: *They shall not appear in My presence empty-handed* (Exodus 23:15).[115]

When they return to that site and enter there, that site is called מלך (*Melekh*), King. It is called King only when they draw near, blessed. When is a king called "King"? When his nobles come to him rich—sated with all they need, lacking nothing. Then it is King. King below—when these adorn Her sufficiently with His holy crowns. Here, the designation *Melekh*, King—to whom does it refer? "העולם אשר קדשנו וצונו (*Ha-olam asher qiddeshanu ve-tsivvanu*), The World who has sanctified us and commanded us." Because it is a world that is not revealed externally, and is concealed, it is designated as such in a concealed fashion. Accordingly, it is referred to only in a hidden way.[116]

The right hand is always *Attah*, You, as has been said. That is why the priest bends down toward that site, at the beginning and at the end. When the lower world is bound and joined to the right, it is called *Barukh*, Blessed, from below above. It is called Blessed only on account of the

mystery of the source to which it is conjoined, entering within, filling it; You—mystery of that Priest joining. So, during prayer a person bows at “Blessed,” for it is a world subordinate to above. This is the difference between the “Blessed” of prayer, and the “Blessed” of other blessings. All is in supernal mystery—to shower blessings upon all worlds.[117]

At the “Blessed” of prayer, a person bows down with his knees, and he lowers his head at “You”—for You is called Head; so, the priest receives at the head; it is always at the head. Hence, bowing at “Blessed,” and lowering of the head at “You.” As for the priest, whenever “You” is recited during prayer, he lowers [his head]. As for the king, after he lowers, he does not rise again. Why? The blessed Holy One said to the moon, “Go, diminish yourself!” She has not risen again.[118]

So, the blessing a person blesses to the blessed Holy One arouses to pour down blessings from on high upon all worlds, as already explained. Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming!

It is written: *For You are our Father: though Abraham* [*does not know us and Israel does not recognize us, You, YHVH, are our Father; our Redeemer from of old is Your name*] (Isaiah 63:16). We have learned: In the time to come, they will say to Isaac…; for left is embraced by right. But how do we know that the right is called Father? As is written: *and he appointed him as a father and a priest* (based on Judges 17:10)—even though higher up is called Father. Even the light that does not shine is called You when it cleaves to the right, as is said: *You, YHVH, are our Father; our Redeemer*….[119]

[2:59b] The nineteenth commandment: to build a sanctuary below corresponding to the Temple above, as is said: מכון (*makhon*), *dais, of Your throne, that You made, O YHVH* (Exodus 15:17); for it is obligatory to build a synagogue below and

offer prayer within every day—serving the blessed Holy One, for prayer is called service.[120]

The synagogue must be built with utmost beauty, and decorated with all manner of adornments, for the synagogue below corresponds to the synagogue above.[121]

The Temple below corresponds to the Temple above, one matching the other. All of the Temple's adornments and all its rites, and all the vessels and ministers, correspond entirely to the pattern above.[122]

The Dwelling fashioned by Moses in the desert corresponded entirely to the pattern above. The Temple built by King Solomon was a house of tranquility modeled on the supernal pattern, with all those adornments—to achieve celestial configuration, a house of tranquility and estate.[123]

The synagogue must have all manner of beautiful adornments, corresponding to the pattern above—to be a house of prayer, for configuring arrangements through prayer, as we have established. The synagogue must have windows, as is written: *windows open* (Daniel 6:11)—corresponding to the celestial pattern, of which [is written] *gazing through the windows, peering through the crevices* (Song of Songs 2:9).[124]

Now, you might say, "Even in a field, to facilitate the ascent of spirit." Not so! For we require a house, and [in a field] there is none; that there should be a house below corresponding to the house above, to bring down celestial habitation to habitation below.[125]

Furthermore, for prayer and spirit must ascend and launch under constriction, in a straight path toward Jerusalem. [60a] Of this is written *From the straits I called to Yah* (Psalms 118:5)—a confined and constricted place is required through which to send forth that spirit, so that it will not deviate to the right or left. In a field, voice cannot be sent forth in this manner. In a similar fashion, the sound of the shofar is thrust out in a straight path from a confined

space—and advances and splits firmaments, rising ascendantly to arouse spirit on high.[126]

Now, you might say, "But look at what is written: *Isaac went out to meditate in the field* (Genesis 24:63)!" Isaac is an exception, for his situation was different, unlike the whole world! Moreover, this verse doesn't appear for this purpose, for undoubtedly he prayed in another field, as we have established.[127]

The twentieth commandment: to be in awe of the sanctuary, for certainly the awe of the blessed Holy One dwells there—celestial habitation descended, residing within. Because celestial habitation resides within, a person must be in awe of that site, like one in awe of his Lord—knowing that there the King has come to reside, the King's habitation within. So, it is written: *My sanctuary you are to hold in awe* (Leviticus 19:30 and 26:2).[128]

[3:88b] The twenty-first commandment: for the priest to arrange the lamps in the Temple every day. We have already established the mystery of the lampstand, a mystery corresponding to the supernal pattern. For first, supernal radiance descends with the anointing oil upon the head of the priest; afterward, he kindles and illumines all the lamps. As is written: *Like precious oil on the head, running down* [*upon the beard, the beard of Aaron, descending* על פי מדותיו (*al pi middotav*), *over the collar of his robes*] (Psalms 133:2); and similarly: *for his God's anointing oil is upon him…* (Leviticus 21:12). That is why permission to arrange the lamps and kindle them twice every day—corresponding to the twice daily radiance of unification—was granted only to the priest. All was as required.[129]

By virtue of the priest, lamps shone entirely above and below [89a], spreading delight, so that joy might pervade in all realms through the kindling of lamps. For there are two [acts performed] by the priest so that joy will pervade in all

realms: kindling of lamps, and incense, as we have already established, as is written: *Oil and incense rejoice the heart* (Proverbs 27:9).[130]

[3:145a] The twenty-second commandment: for the priest to bless the people every day with the raising of the fingers, and recite the blessing every day, so that blessings pervade above and below. For fingers abide in supernal mystery: five within five; five of the right, and five of the left. The five of the right are more praiseworthy than those of the left, for the right is more praiseworthy than the left. Hence, during the blessing with which the priest blesses the people he must raise right over left, and gaze benevolently.[131]

When the priest spreads his hands, *Shekhinah* alights upon those fingers—for the blessed Holy One concurs with the priest in those blessings, and Israel are blessed from two sides, above and below: above—*Shekhinah* resting upon those fingers; and below—the priest who blesses.[132]

Come and see! Actions performed below arouse entities on high. Accordingly, in the spreading of the fingers of the priest below, *Shekhinah* arouses to come and dwell upon them. Likewise, there are many things in the world that arouse entities on high; for through arousal below, another power is aroused above, as we have established in numerous places. This is the significance of the *lulav*, and this is the reason for the shofar; many follow this pattern. The ten fingers arouse *Shekhinah* to alight upon them, stimulating ten other rungs above to illumine—all at the same time.[133]

For this reason, it is forbidden for a person to deploy fingers in raising in vain—only during prayer and blessings, and at [the mention of] the name of the blessed Holy One. We have already established that they are the arousal of the holy Name and the mystery of faith. Raising of the fingers—ten powers are appointed in their raising, as has been

established. The priest should bless benevolently with the consent of *Shekhinah*, as explained.[134]

When this blessing emerges from the priest's mouth, those sixty letters shoot forth and soar through the firmament—sixty princes appointed over each and every letter, all of them confirming all those blessings. Why are there sixty letters in these blessings? Because Israel are sixty myriads; and in the mystery of sixty myriads they abide constantly in the world, each one a myriad.[135]

The holy name that emerges from this ascends above unto the throne on high. All consent with the priest during these blessings—*Shekhinah* above, and *Shekhinah* below—as well as the sixty appointed princes. Of this is written *They shall set My name upon the Children of Israel* (Numbers 6:27). Then the blessed Holy One blesses the priests, as explained.[136]

[3:83a] The twenty-third commandment: to honor one's father and mother. For a person must be in awe of his father and mother and honor them. Just as a person is required to honor the blessed Holy One on account of the spirit He bestowed within him, and be in awe of Him, so is he required to honor his father and mother on account of his body, and be in awe of them. For they partner with the blessed Holy One and make the body for him. Since they are partners in the deed, they should share in the awe and honor![137]

Correspondingly, three partners were present above in the mystery of the human being. Even though Adam's body was from dust, it was not from dust of this realm, but rather from dust of the Temple on high. Father and Mother were present, supernal King joined with them and sent forth the spirit of life within—and he was created. Following this pattern, all come into being—above and below. That is why a person must be in awe of the blessed Holy One, and in awe of his father and mother.[138]

In the Secrets of Torah: Adam possessed nothing whatsoever of this world. A certain Righteous One performed conjugally with His Female, and from that conjugal union a body was fashioned, its radiance greater than all the angelic messengers on high. When that body was created, the supernal King sent forth twenty-two letters to that Righteous One, joining with them—and he emerged into the world.[139]

As soon as he emerged, the sun and moon beheld him; and their lights [83b] were obstructed, for the apple of his feet darkened their light. Why? Because he derived from the work of the supernal Sun and Moon! As soon as he sinned, he darkened and became smaller—and required a different body of skin and flesh, as is written: *YHVH Elohim made coats of skin for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them* (Genesis 3:21).[140]

There never was before—nor was there after—the like of the conjugal union performed by that Righteous One with His Female. For handiwork did not emerge for the refiner until Enoch appeared, whereupon the blessed Holy One took him from the earth; he clarified dross and slag from silver; likewise all the righteous on the earth. Afterward, that site was restored, and spirits and souls were fashioned through their conjugal union; the body from below on earth. Hence, the human being comes to the world through the collaboration of above and below—and must be in awe of those partners and honor them, as explained.[141]

[2:92a] The twenty-fourth commandment: to remember the Sabbath day, as is said: *Remember the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Exodus 20:8). We have already established the mystery of Sabbath in many places: a day of rest for the remembrance of the world; totality of Torah; one who observes the Sabbath is as though he observes the entire Torah.[142]

As already explained, the remembrance of Sabbath is by sanctifying it with all manner of sanctifications. One who remembers the king must bless him; and one who remembers the Sabbath must sanctify it.[143]

As already explained, זכור (*zakhor*), *Remember*—for דכורא (*dekhora*), male; שמור (*shamor*), *Observe*—for female. This and that, without separation. Sabbath—mystery of all faith, spanning from the supernal head to the end of all rungs. Sabbath is the whole.[144]

There are three rungs—all of them called Sabbath: supernal Sabbath; Sabbath of day; Sabbath of night—entirely one; the whole is called Sabbath. When each one enjoys dominion, it draws its companions—inviting them along during its reign. When one comes to the world, all of them come and are summoned with it.[145]

When night comes, it invites along the Sabbath of day, inviting it within its palace, hiding together. As soon as this one arrives, supernal Sabbath flows upon it—all of them concealed in the palace of night. For this reason the feast of the night is as critical as that of the day.[146]

When day comes, it invites along these two others—upper rung and lower rung; one that illumines, and one that is illuminated. All together are called Sabbath, reigning on Sabbath day. These three rungs are the totality and mystery of all Torah—Written Torah, Prophets, and Writings. One who observes the Sabbath observes the entire Torah![147]

Two pearls, one peg with them, within them—extending between one and the other. The upper pearl has no hue, no manifest appearance.[148]

When this pearl begins to manifest, seven engraved letters radiate—protruding, sparkling, splitting cracks and castles—each one illumining. These seven letters are two names, inscribed in that pearl. On Sabbath day, they sparkle and shine and open openings, emerging forth empowered. They are: אהיה יהו (*'HYH YHV*). The letters sparkle

—and in their scintillation they combine with each other, illumining one another.[149]

As they inter-combine, they are illuminated by one another in two modes: a white mode, and a red mode. From these two modes, two other names are fashioned—until the letters culminate in seven names.[150]

א (*Alef*) emerges forth and sparkles, and combines with the letter ו (*vav*), and the two of them shine in two modes—two names: one called יהוה (*YHVH*), and one called אל (*El*), shining as one. ה (*He*) emerges forth and sparkles, and combines with the letter ה (*he*), and the two of them shine in two modes—two names: one called יֱהוִה (*YHVH*), mystery of אלהים (*Elohim*), and one called אלהים (*Elohim*), shining as one.[151]

י (*Yod*) combines with י (*yod*), and they shine and sparkle together—combining with one another, the two of them shining—engraved and inscribed as one. They raise their head—glistening, scintillating. Branches ascend from this side and that side—eleven branches. These two radiant letters join with one another: יהוה יהוה מצפץ מצפץ (*YHVH YHVH MTsPTs MTsPTs*)—in the mystery of the Thirteen Qualities of Compassion. When these two letters combine, embracing one another, they raise their head—radiating and gleaming over all through the eleven branches issuing to each [92b] side.[152]

The remaining ה (*he*) attains a certain name, joining with them: אדני (*Adonai*).[153]

All these names protrude and sparkle, and emerge empowered on this day. When these attain dominion, the upper pearl emerges—protruding and sparkling; yet in its scintillation no hue is seen within.[154]

As it emerges, it strikes those seven names. One of those names—*Adonai*, the seventh—is crowned and enters the lower pearl, and another name settles in its place: יה (*Yah*). The upper pearl surrounds it, and the spark sparkling in this name is crowned.[155]

After striking those names, seventy branches emanate from them in all directions. They all join together, forming a single chariot and throne for the upper pearl; and the King reigns with His crowns on the throne on this day—and all rejoice. When all rejoice, the King sits on the throne of judgment, ascending by the seventy branches of the throne, as we have said.[156]

Those two letters ascend and descend and shine, adorning twenty-two letters—totality of Torah. They strike the first two letters; in one instance amounting to six tribes, and in the second instance to six other tribes—the twelve tribes of supernal Israel. Again, these two letters ascend and descend, striking the two letters at the end of the twenty-two letters; in one instance amounting to five rungs, and in the second instance to five rungs—the ten utterances—consummating twenty-two letters. Twelve tribes in the first two letters, and ten utterances in the two final letters—twenty-two letters, totality of Torah! The upper pearl inherits this mystery on Sabbath day.[157]

As for the lower pearl: When the upper pearl sits on the throne of seventy-two, and the twenty-two letters shine, the lower pearl—which was in darkness—gazes upon that radiance by force of the potency of the letters with which it is inscribed, called אדני (*Adonai*). Then, it illuminates and that light ascends, and it receives all the twenty-two supernal letters—the pearl absorbing them within, radiating a sparkling radiance in seventy-two directions.[158]

As soon as this pearl scintillates and absorbs those letters within, the upper pearl is drawn toward them, so that pearl cleaves to pearl—and all is one. This is the single mystery of the praise, as we have established.[159]

When letters sparkle on this side and that—this constitutes the peg inserted within them, between pearl and pearl. Then, all attains the mystery of the holy Name of Forty-two Letters, and the mystery of the holy Name of

Seventy-two Letters of the supernal chariot. All—this and that—is called Sabbath. This is the mystery of Sabbath.[160]

[2:40b] The twenty-fifth commandment: to eradicate leaven; for this commandment was conveyed to Israel, as is written: *The people carried off their dough before it had leavened* (Exodus 12:34), and it is written: *no leaven shall be found in your houses* (ibid., 19). The Companions have already established this, and we have established the mystery of the difference between leaven and *matsah* in numerous places: one is the evil impulse; the other, the good impulse.[161]

The twenty-sixth commandment: to recount the glory of the Exodus from Egypt, for it is incumbent on a person to recount this glory—forever. So have we established: every person who narrates the Exodus from Egypt, and takes full delight in the story, is destined to delight in the *Shekhinah* in the world to come—attaining the greatest delight of all—for such is a person who delights in his Lord. The blessed Holy One delights in that story![162]

At that time, the blessed Holy One assembles His entire retinue and says to them, "Go and listen to the story of My glory that My children are recounting, delighting in My deliverance." Then, all of them assemble and come and join with Israel, listening to the story of the glory—in which they rejoice in the joy of the deliverance of their Lord. Then, they come and laud the blessed Holy One for all the miracles and mighty deeds, and they laud Him for the Holy People He has on earth, rejoicing in the joy of the deliverance of their Lord.[163]

Then, power and might are added on high. Through that story, Israel give power to their Lord—like a king to whom power and might are added when his might is praised and he is lauded, so that all are in awe of him, his

glory ascending over all. Accordingly, one must offer praise and recount the story, [41a] as explained.[164]

In the same manner it is incumbent on a person to always recount before the blessed Holy One, and publicize the miracle before Him, concerning all the miracles He has performed. Now, you might say, “Why is it an obligation? Surely the blessed Holy One knows everything—all that was and will be! Why publicize before Him what He has done and what He knows?” Well, a person must certainly publicize and recount before Him all that He has done. For these words ascend; and the entire retinue above assembles and beholds them, and all of them laud the blessed Holy One—His glory ascending over them, above and below.[165]

Similar is one who recounts and specifies his sins concerning all that he done. Now, you might say, “Why is this necessary?” Well, the Accuser is always standing by in the presence of the blessed Holy One to recount peoples’ sins and demand justice for them. Since the person acts in advance to specify his sins (each and every one), he doesn’t leave an opening for the Accuser, and he is unable to call him to judgment. For he always demands justice first, and afterward recounts and accuses, “So-and-so did such-and-such.” So, a person should act in advance to specify his sins.[166]

As soon as the Accuser sees this, he has no opening against him, whereupon he withdraws from him totally. If he turns back in *teshuvah*—fine. If not, the Accuser lurks above him, and says, “So-and-so, who came before You brazenly, is rejecting his Lord! His sins are such-and-such.” Accordingly, it is proper to be mindful of all these matters, so as to be a faithful servant before the blessed Holy One.[167]

The twenty-seventh commandment: to eat *Matsah* on *Pesaḥ*, for it is a remembrance throughout the generations about the mystery of faith. We have already established that at

that time, Israel departed from the mystery of alien gods and entered the mystery of faith. They have established this mystery in numerous places.[168]

The twenty-eighth commandment: to slaughter the passover offering at twilight on the fourteenth of Nisan, a commemoration of the passover offering of Egypt, an obligation upon all, as is said: *and the whole congregation of the community of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight* (Exodus 12:6).[169]

This passover offering must be kept from the tenth day on, as is written: *On the tenth day of this month, let each take* [*a lamb for a father's house, a lamb for a household*] (Exodus 12:3). Why? Because from the tenth day on, the moon begins to shine, until it is full on the fifteenth; and on the fourteenth, it must be slaughtered—in the hour that judgment looms over the world.[170]

The mystery is: to remove the slime from the presence of the Holy Covenant, and to delight in the fire-roasted wafting aroma. Hence, only when sated; hence, *no uncircumcised man shall eat of it* (Exodus 12:48). One who possesses the holy covenant shall eat of it; one who does not possess the holy covenant shall not eat of it. For the one of the covenant is able to break the strength of the alien power, removing the foreskin from the presence of the Covenant. Accordingly, this must be performed by scions of the covenant, and not scions of the foreskin.[171]

When the blessed Holy One came to Egypt, He saw the blood of the paschal lamb marked on the entrance, and the blood of the covenant—how they presided over the entrance, as is written: *Take a bundle of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin and touch* [*some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and to the two doorposts*] (Exodus 12:22). *Hyssop*—we have already established that it eliminates maleficent spirits, removing every aspect of

evil spirit through its arousal, as is written: *Purge me with hyssop so that I may be pure* (Psalms 51:9).[172]

At the ultimate redemption of Israel in the time to come, the blessed Holy One will bring the evil impulse and slaughter it. But now, at this redemption is written *and the whole congregation of the community of Israel shall slaughter it*…; a foreshadowing of the ultimate redemption in the time to come.[173]

On the two doorposts and on the lintel (Exodus 12:7)—on one, the mark of the letter י (*yod*); and on another, the mark of the letter י (*yod*); and on the other, the mark of the letter י (*yod*), displaying the insignia of the holy covenant: the foreskin smashed by the presence of the blood of the covenant marked all over—blood on blood. When the Destroyer passed through, he saw [the blood] and rose from the house, as is said: *and will not allow the Destroyer*… (ibid., 23).[174]

If the blessed Holy One Himself slayed, why is it written *and will not allow the Destroyer*, implying that the Destroyer went and not the blessed Holy One? Well, undoubtedly the blessed Holy One slayed; and the Destroyer went [41b] to find a pretext to impugn Israel. As soon as he saw the smashing of the foreskin on two sides, he fled and withdrew from them. And because the blessed Holy One slayed all those firstborn of that side, He established the firstborn of Israel to be redeemed, so that the Other Side will not find any pretext whatsoever to impugn them. In all ways the blessed Holy One protects them, as a father does his sons.[175]

The twenty-ninth commandment: to eat this paschal lamb on מצות (*matsot*), unleavened bread, and bitter herbs, as is written: *on matsot and bitter herbs they shall eat it* (Numbers 9:11). *Matsot and bitter herbs*—spelled מצת (*matsot*). What has one got to do with the other? Well, to demonstrate the exile of *Shekhinah* with Israel—in their

bitterness, as is written: *They embittered their lives with harsh labor…* (Exodus 1:14). When one eats this paschal lamb, it is to demonstrate everything they did to them in Egypt during that exile and bondage.[176]

What is the significance of what is written: *and no bone shall you break in it* (Exodus 12:46)? To show it disdain, and to all the gods of the Egyptians; for the bones were cast into the street, and dogs came and dragged them from place to place. This was the most painful of all for them; for bones are the configuration of the body—similar to another aspect—and Israel hurled them into the street contemptibly. That is why it is written: *and no bone shall you break in it*—you shall not break; but dogs came and broke them![177]

Furthermore, the Egyptians came out afterward and saw the bones that the dogs had carried around from place to place, and they took them and crushed them into dust so that the dogs would not find them. This constituted the greatest annulment of idolatry—from their side! Through this the blessed Holy One was exalted in glory, and all the alien powers subdued. When the nullification derives from their side, they are especially subdued. Hence, Israel were commanded: *and no bone shall you break in it*.[178]

[3:152b] The thirtieth commandment: to offer the second Passover offering—for those who were unable or were defiled by some kind of impurity.[179]

If the mystery of the Passover offering—the mystery of faith that Israel enter—prevails during Nisan, and then is the time for rejoicing, how can those who were unable or were defiled offer it in the second month? Its time has passed![180]

Well, once Assembly of Israel is crowned with Her adornments in Nisan, She does not remove Her crowns and adornments for thirty days. All those thirty days—from the day Israel emerged from the Passover offering—the *Matronita* sits with Her adornments, all Her hosts in joy. One who

desires to behold the *Matronita* can behold! A herald proclaims, “Whoever was unable to behold the *Matronita*, come and behold—before Her gates are locked!” When does the herald proclaim? On the fourteenth of the second month; for seven days hence, the gates are open. From then on, the gates are locked. So, the second Passover offering.[181]

[3:97a] The thirty-first commandment: to count the counting of the *omer*, as we have already established. The mystery is: Even though Israel were purified to offer the passover sacrifice and they had emerged from impurity, they were not perfectly whole and pure. That is why there is no complete *Hallel* during the days of *Pesaḥ*; for they were not yet fully restored.[182]

Like a woman emerging from impurity—as soon as she emerges, from then on, *she shall count for herself* (Leviticus 15:28). Similarly here: when Israel left Egypt, they emerged [97b] from impurity and offered the Passover offering, eating at their Father’s table. From then on, let them do a count—drawing the Wife to Her Husband, to unite as one. These fifty days are clean days, entering the mystery of the World that is Coming, to receive Torah, drawing the Wife to Her Husband.[183]

Because these days are days of World of the Male, this count was entrusted only to men alone. Hence, this count is performed standing. Matters pertaining to Lower World are performed seated, not standing. This is the mystery of standing prayer and seated prayer.[184]

As for these fifty—they are forty-nine, totality of the faces of Torah; for the fiftieth day is the actual mystery of Torah. These are fifty days in which are Sabbatical and Jubilee.[185]

Now, you might say, “But they are fifty!” This is of no consequence, for one is hidden; the world relies upon it. On the fiftieth day, the hidden is revealed and concealed within,

like a king who arrives at the house of his best man, appearing there. Similarly here: the fiftieth day; we have established this mystery.[186]

[3:97a] The thirty-second commandment: to offer the *omer* sacrifice. This sacrifice pertains entirely to the cleaving of above and below, *Matronita* and Her children going together. Israel offer this *omer* in their purity; and this sacrifice is from barley—offered to inject love between the Wife and Her Husband.[187]

The Woman of Whoredom distances herself from this examination, for she cannot endure being by Her side. The Woman of Strength draws Herself near to approach the High Priest—certainly *she is pure; she will be cleared and sown with seed* (Numbers 5:28)—and She adds strength and love to Her Husband.[188]

The Woman of Whoredom flees from the Sanctuary, so as not to draw near. For were she to approach Her when the Woman of Strength is examining Herself, she would perish from the world. That is why she does not seek to approach the Sanctuary, and flees from it—leaving Israel pure, with no other intermingling, with the Mystery of Faith.[189]

The mystery of this secret: two sisters. When one catches a whiff of the examination of the other *her belly will swell and her thigh sag* (Numbers 5:27); for the examination of the Woman of Strength is deadly poison for the Woman of Whoredom. This is the advice the blessed Holy One gave His children—to offer this sacrifice, for the sake of the Woman of Strength, so that the Woman of Whoredom will flee from Her. Happy are Israel in this world, and in the world that is coming![190]

[97b] The thirty-third commandment: to make the festival of *Shavu'ot*, as is written: *You shall make* חג שבועות (*ḥag shavu'ot*), *a festival of weeks, for YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 16:10).

שבועות (*Shavu'ot*), *Weeks*—because Israel entered the mystery of fifty days, which are שבעה שבועות (*shiv'ah shavu'ot*), seven weeks. Through the sacrifice of the *omer*, the evil impulse is thwarted, for she flees from the Woman of Strength. And when it does not draw near there, Israel cleave to the blessed Holy One, and it is nullified above and below.[191]

So, it is called accordingly: עצרת (*Atseret*), Stoppage, for it pertains to the nullification of the evil impulse. That is why *sin offering* is not mentioned regarding it, as in the other instances—where *sin offering* is written of them. Then, all lights gather in the Woman of Strength; and so *Atseret*, Gathering.[192]

שבועות (*Shavu'ot*), *Weeks*—without specifying how many! Well, wherever it is mentioned unspecified, the name is decisive—from שבע (*sheva*), seven; and it is written: שבועות שבעה (*Shiv'ah shavu'ot*), *Seven weeks, you shall count for yourself* (Deuteronomy 16:9). Why then is *weeks* written by itself? Well, weeks unspecified is as it should be—including above and below. For wherever these arouse, those also arouse with them.[193]

Until the advent of Solomon, they were not disclosed. When Solomon appeared, he particularized them, as is written: *seven days and seven days* (1 Kings 8:65)—the particular. At other times—in general, weeks unspecified. Aside from Solomon, no other person was worthy to particularize them; for those seven days below did not shine consummately until Solomon appeared, whereupon the moon waxed full with those seven days. Here, *Festival of Weeks*—unspecified, for lower are comprised in higher; not shining as in the days of Solomon.[194]

The thirty-fourth commandment: [98a] to offer two loaves of bread. We have already established: two loaves of bread—two *Shekhinah*s, above and below, joining as one. Corresponding to them are the two loaves of bread on Sabbath—double food, food of above and below. Of this we have learned: It is written: *two omers* לאחד (*la-eḥad*), *for each*

(Exodus 16:22). *La-eḥad, To one*, precisely; uniting in a single site called *one*. Who is that? *The voice is the voice of Jacob* (Genesis 27:22), who inherits above and below, two breads as one. Because Sabbath is mystery of above and below, and all is Sabbath, two breads were brought.[195]

The thirty-fifth commandment: to offer the sacrifice with the two loaves of bread, as is written: *You shall offer with the bread* [*seven unblemished yearling lambs and one bull from the herd and two rams. They shall be an ascent offering to YHVH and their grain offering and their libations, a fire offering, a fragrant odor to YHVH*] (Leviticus 23:18).[196]

[2:271b] The thirty-sixth commandment: to offer a sacrifice on the new moon every month—the renewal of the moon; and during Her renewal to draw love near, above and below, removing slime from the Sanctuary. The new moon sacrifice ascends above in order to channel radiant faces below from the source on high—necessary because of the diminution and lessening of the moon.[197]

The goat of the new moon eradicates slime, removing it so as not to cover the moon. Then flow gushes toward Her from above below, and the moon shines fittingly. For the goat always clears slime from the Sanctuary, stimulating the streaming of radiance from above below. This sacrifice ascends above.[198]

That is why it is written concerning it: חטאת (*ḥattat*), *a sin offering, for YHVH* (Numbers 28:15)—on account of the slime covering the moon. This is the mystery of what is written: חטאת (*ḥattat*), *sin, crouches at the opening* (Genesis 4:7).[199]

Now, you might say, "Why is it written *a sin offering for YHVH*?" Well, it is precisely that goat that removes the *ḥattat*, generating the streaming of radiance from above. This is the significance of *and one goat* לחטאת (*le-ḥattat*), *as a sin offering, for YHVH* (Numbers 28:15). *Le-ḥattat, for the ḥattat*—to remove it from the Sanctuary. *For YHVH*—channeling

radiance from above. For when the *ḥattat* is removed, radiance and joy descend from above below. So, this sacrifice ascends on high; and this sacrifice is called 'atonement,' clearing the Sanctuary and removing slime.[200]

The thirty-seventh commandment: to offer the additional Sabbath sacrifice—additional radiance and joy, as explained in numerous places.[201]

The thirty-eighth commandment: to offer the additional new moon sacrifice, as explained.

The thirty-ninth commandment: to offer the additional *Pesaḥ* sacrifice.

The fortieth commandment: to offer the additional *Atseret* sacrifice.

The forty-first commandment: to offer the additional Rosh Hashanah sacrifice.

[3:98b] The forty-second commandment: to blast the shofar on Rosh Hashanah—the day of judgment for the world, as we have established. The Companions have already established the significance of what is written: *Blast the shofar on the new moon*, בכסה (*ba-keseh*), *on the covering, for our festival day* (Psalms 81:4). This has been explained—for this is the day when the moon אתכסי (*itkassei*), is concealed, and the world abides in judgment. For the Accuser covers, conceals, and locks the entrance to the King—the site where judgment inheres, demanding judgment upon the world.[202]

Now, you might say, 'How is the Accuser granted permission to cover over and demand judgment?' Well, certainly the blessed Holy One enabled this Accuser to demand judgment upon the entire world, and He set him a specific day to demand before Him all the judgments of the world. For the blessed Holy One made him and installed him before Him, so that the awe of the blessed Holy One would ascend and prevail over all. This is the mystery: *God*

made, so that they would be in awe of Him (Ecclesiastes 3:14). What did He make? He made this Accuser—ordaining him before Him, so that there would be a sharp sword over the whole world; all this [99a] so that all would be in awe of the blessed Holy One. This is the bailiff who demands punishments for people's sins—demanding judgment, seizing, slaying, and striking them—all in accordance with what issues from judgment.[203]

Likewise, the officer of the court below, to whom permission has been granted to recount before the court, "So-and-so did this; so-and-so transgressed that," demanding judgment for them. We have learned: permission is granted to that officer of the court to lock the entrance to the court until judgment is decreed for all he demands. The court is not permitted to reject him, on account of *For I, YHVH, love justice* (Isaiah 61:8); and he desires that the world abide in judgment—to know that there is Judgment and a Judge.[204]

Similarly, the blessed Holy installed this one before Him, demanding judgment before the King for all the world's inhabitants. On this day, permission is granted him to conceal the entrance of the King—the moon covered within—until judgment is decreed upon all the inhabitants of the world. Even though everything is revealed before the blessed Holy One, He desires only by judgment. All follows a single pattern, above and below.[205]

On this day He arrays His throne of judgment; and the bailiff comes and demands judgment for all the deeds of the inhabitants of the world—everyone corresponding to his ways, in accordance with what he did. Witnesses come forward and testify about all the deeds of the world's inhabitants. These are the "eyes of YHVH" that range throughout the entire world. Innumerable are the "eyes of YHVH," countless—roaming and ranging throughout the whole world, beholding all the deeds of the world's inhabitants![206]

Woe to those who do not consider and contemplate their deeds! For the witnesses of the King arise and follow them, and observe and behold everything they do and say! For they ascend and testify before the King, while the bailiff stands before the King and demands judgment, “So-and-so transgressed the law; so-and-so did such-and-such; the witnesses are here!” Until the blessed Holy One asks them, they are not permitted to testify. Then they offer testimony, and everything is written on a list in the presence of the King.

In the King’s palace there is a certain hall; this hall is filled with white fire. This fire revolves in a ring, glistening sparks, never ceasing. Within this hall is another hall, filled with black fire, unabating. Two scribes are permanently stationed before the King. During judgment, all the witnesses testify before the King, and the scribes take [99b] from the ring of white fire and write upon it with black fire.[207]

Then the King delays judgment for a specified time—perhaps meanwhile they will return in *teshuvah*. If they return, the lists are torn up. If not, the King is seated, and all the advocates stand before Him. A herald rises and proclaims, “So-and-so did such-and-such. Who will plead his favor?” If there is someone to plead his favor—fine. If not, he is handed over to the bailiff.[208]

The blessed Holy One knows everything. What need has He of all this? It is only so that there will not be a pretext for the inhabitants of the world—to demonstrate that He administers all truthfully and that one who is saved from His judgment pleases Him.[209]

Now, you might say, “How do we know?” This has been transmitted to the wise. Even to those who do not know—one who wishes to contemplate should ponder the revealed and thereby know the concealed; for all follows a single pattern. Everything the blessed Holy One ordained on earth corresponds entirely to the supernal model.[210]

Rosh Hashanah is judgment day, and the King sits on the throne of judgment. The bailiff arrives, covers the entrance of the King, and demands judgment. And even though the blessed Holy One loves judgment—as is said: *For I, YHVH, love justice* (Isaiah 61:8)—His love for His children triumphs over the love for judgment; and the moment the bailiff arises to press his claims against them, He commanded to blast the shofar, arousing compassion from below above.[211]

By means of the shofar, a sound—comprising fire, air, and water—ascends; and from them is fashioned a single voice, and another voice on high arouses. When that voice is aroused above and below, all the claims pressed by the Accuser are baffled.[212]

On Rosh Hashanah Isaac ventures forth alone; and he summons Esau to give him to taste of dishes of the whole world—every one in accordance with his ways. For at that time *his eyes were too dim to see* (Genesis 27:1)—for he emerges from him and darkens creatures' faces. He detaches and lies on the bed of judgment and calls to Esau, saying, "*Hunt me some game, and make me a dish and bring it to me* (ibid., 3–4.)"[213]

Rebekah said to her son Jacob (ibid., 6)—beloved of her soul, her beloved son devoted to her since the day the world was created; she instructs him to arouse with dishes of his own. Jacob arouses [100a] from below and adorns himself in prayers and supplications. *The voice is the voice of Jacob* (ibid., 22)—ascending by the shofar. Jacob arouses toward him and approaches him *and he served him and he ate* (ibid., 25)—blending with one another. As soon as he blends with him, *he brought him wine* (ibid.)—the preserved wine, wine of joy, joy of the heart, mystery of the World that is Coming. Then, *he smelled the fragrance of his garments* (ibid., 27)—the prayers and supplications that ascend; *and blessed him* (ibid.)—fury subsides, and the heart rejoices; and all is compassion.[214]

As soon as he blends with Jacob, all the forces, potencies, and furies that were primed for judgment disperse—nowhere to be found—and Israel emerges from judgment with joy and blessings. *When Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of his father Isaac* (ibid., 30)—on this day, with joy and supernal blessings; *Esau came in from his hunt* (ibid.)—bearing burdens of the deeds of the world. *He too prepared delicacies* (ibid., 31)—sharpening his tongue to press claims. He arranges witnesses *and brought them to his father and he said… "Let my father get up!"* (ibid.)—let him arouse in his judgments; *and eat* (ibid.)—some wicked deeds from the whole world that I have found.[215]

Isaac trembled very violently (ibid., 33)—for he is unable to disengage from the principle of Jacob, who is in joy; *and said, "Who was it then that hunted game?"* (ibid.)—with numerous prayers and supplications; "*and I ate of it all before you came and I blessed him. Now blessed he will remain!"* (ibid.) *When Esau heard his father's words, he cried out* [*with a very great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me—me too, my father*!"] (ibid., 34)—for he realizes that his game was worthless. Until finally he says to him, "*Here, from the fat of the earth will be your dwelling*" (ibid., 39)—the mighty and legions of the other nations. This is most difficult of all for him! *Esau seethed with resentment against Jacob* (ibid., 41)—pursuing him and denouncing him always.[216]

Jacob traverses the days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur fleeing—to be saved from him, returning in *teshuvah* and undertaking the fast. When Yom Kippur arrives, Israel know that Esau is coming, accompanied by 400 men—all of them accusers—poised to denounce them. Immediately, *Jacob was very frightened and distressed* (Genesis 32:8)—he increases prayer and supplication: *Jacob said, "God of my father Abraham and God of my father* [*Isaac!*]…" (ibid., 10). Finally, he takes counsel, *for he*

reasoned, "Let me placate him with the tribute that goes before me" (ibid., 21). *And he took from what he had in hand a tribute* [*to Esau his brother*]: *two hundred she-goats and* [*twenty*] *he-goats*, [*two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milch camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten he-asses*] (ibid., 14–16). So befits his side: *camels*—the serpent like a camel. When [100b] Samael seduced Adam, he rode upon a serpent like a camel. We have learned: one who sees a camel in his dream—death has been decreed upon him from above and he has been delivered from it; and all is one.[217]

Then Esau transforms into Jacob's protector. Jacob, however, desires neither his honey nor his sting: *Let my lord pass on ahead of his servant* (Genesis 33:14), whereupon *Esau returned that day on his way to Seir* (ibid., 16). When? During *Ne'ilah*, for he withdraws from the Holy People, and the blessed Holy One forgives their sins and grants them atonement.[218]

Once the Accuser has left with the gift and has withdrawn from them, the blessed Holy One desires to rejoice with His children. What is written? *Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built himself a house*, [*and for his cattle he made* סכת (*sukkot*), *sheds*;] *therefore the place is called Succoth* (Genesis 33:17). Since they dwell in *sukkot*, they are delivered from the Accuser; and the blessed Holy One rejoices in His children. Happy is their share in this world and in the world that is coming![219]

[3:101a] The forty-third commandment: to afflict oneself on Yom Kippur, subjugating body and soul, in the mystery of the five afflictions of the five rungs of Yom Kippur; for the Accuser comes to recall their sins, as discussed, and all of them are in complete *teshuvah* before their Father. All is as already explained in numerous places.[220]

[3:63a] The forty-fourth commandment: for the High Priest to perform the service of the day as required and send off the goat to Azazel. This mystery, as already explained, is in order that he withdraw from the Holy People, and not demand justice for their sins before the King, and not bring charges against them; for he enjoys potency and dominion only when fury is empowered above. By means of that gift, he subsequently transforms into their protector. So he is cast out from the presence of the King. We have already established that this is because he is *end of all flesh* (Genesis 6:13).[221]

The Holy People give him what befits him—שעיר (*sa'ir*), a goat. This is the mystery: *Look, my brother Esau is* איש שעיר (*ish sa'ir*), *a hairy man* (Genesis 27:11). Just as on the side of holiness there is male and female, similarly on the side of impurity there is male and female. As the saying goes, "Throw a dog a bone, he'll lick the dust of your feet."[222]

Ben Zoma was asked, "Is it permitted to castrate a dog?" He replied, "*In your land you shall not do it* (Leviticus 22:24)—to all that is in your land you shall not do it." Just as the world needs this, the world needs that! Concerning this is said: *and behold, it was very good* (Genesis 1:31)—the Angel of Death. It must not be eliminated from the world; the world needs it! Even though it is written concerning them: *The dogs are fiercely ravenous*, [*they never know satiety*] (Isaiah 56:11), they should not be abolished from the world. All is required—good and bad![223]

Accordingly, on this day we must throw the dog a bone. While he is dragging it, the one who enters the hall of the King enters, with no one to hinder him. Afterward, [63b] he wags his tail![224]

What is the significance of what is written: [*Aaron shall lay his two hands on the head of the live goat*] *and confess over it all the iniquities of the Children of Israel* (Leviticus 16:21), and *The goat shall bear upon it all their iniquities* (ibid., 22)? As soon as he sees this goat, he craves it, to be

adorned by it, and he is unaware of the sins borne by the goat. He returns to the people of Israel, and sees them without sins, without transgressions—for all of them rest upon the head of the goat! He ascends above and praises them in the presence of the blessed Holy One. The blessed Holy One takes note of the testimony of the Accuser, and—even though He knows every deed—because His desire is to be compassionate to His people, He takes pity on Israel.[225]

Everything rests upon this, so that the mystery of severe judgment will not be aroused above, empowering this one so that the inhabitants of the world are destroyed—because he hails from the aspect of severe judgment. If this one arouses, it is through the sins of human beings that he arouses. For he does not enjoy arousal to ascend above, to rouse severe judgment, save for by people's sins. For when a person sins, he swarms around—together with countless thousands of his minions—and they assemble there, and seize it, and ascend on high. May the Compassionate One save us! Concerning all, the blessed Holy One provided Israel advice—to be saved from all facets. Of this is written *Happy the people who has it so, happy the people whose God is YHVH!* (Psalms 144:15).[226]

[3:103b] The forty-fifth commandment: to dwell in a *sukkah*—as we have established, in order to demonstrate that Israel dwell in the mystery of faith, without any fear at all, because the Accuser has withdrawn from them. Whoever abides in the mystery of faith dwells in the *sukkah*, as we have established, as is written: *All natives in Israel shall dwell in booths* (Leviticus 23:42)—one who is in the mystery of faith and from the seed and root of Israel shall abide *in booths*. This mystery has been explained in numerous places.[227]

The forty-sixth commandment: to bring a sacrifice every day [during the seven days of *Sukkot*]. This sacrifice is so that all will have a share in His children's joy. Since they are all

joined to the tree—low branches facing toward the stock of the tree—all are blessed on account of the tree. Even though they are of no avail, all are blessed. In Israel's joy in their Father above, they bestow a share of the blessings to all the other nations who have a connection and are linked to Israel.[228]

All these sacrifices are in order to grant nourishment to the princes of the other nations. For out of the love with which the blessed Holy One loves His children, He desires that all will be their friends. This is the mystery: *When a man's ways please YHVH, He causes even his enemies to be at peace with him* (Proverbs 16:7)—even all the supernal denouncers are transformed into Israel's friends! When legions above become Israel's friends, how much more so all those below![229]

Now, you might say, "They used to offer the sacrifice to them?!" Not so! Rather, all ascends and is offered to the blessed Holy One; and He apportions nourishment to all the multitudes of the other sides, so that they might enjoy the gift of His children, and become their friends—so that above and below will know that there is no people like the people of Israel, the allotted share of the blessed Holy One. The blessed Holy One's glory ascends above and below, as is fitting; and all the supernal multitudes open, saying, "*Who is like Your people Israel, a nation unique on earth*?" (2 Samuel 7:23).[230]

[3:104a] The forty-seventh commandment: to take the *lulav* on that day along with its species. We have already established this mystery, and the Companions have established it: just as the blessed Holy One takes Israel during these days and rejoices in them, similarly Israel take the blessed Holy One as their share and rejoice in Him. This is the mystery of the *lulav* and its species—mystery of the image of אדם (*Adam*), Human, as explained.[231]

רזא דרזי דסתרי דאוריתא קדישתא שלימתא

Raza de-Razei de-Sitrei de-Oraita Qadishta Shelimta

SECRET OF SECRETS OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE HOLY, PERFECT TORAH

And you, you shall behold from all the people (Exodus 18:21).[1]

This is the Book תולדות אדם (*toledot adam*), *of Human Features* (Genesis 5:1)—this is one of the concealed and profound books.[2]

Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai said, "I raised my hands in prayer to the One who created the world; for even though concealed, ancient, and exalted matters are revealed in this verse, one must examine and gaze into the secrets of this ancient book, from which the hidden Book of King Solomon was derived.[3]

"*This*—on which everything depends. *This*—Tree of Life. *This*—none other revealed. *This*—what does *this* mean? As is said: *This month is for you* (Exodus 12:2)—*this* is Nisan, none other.[4]

"*This is the book*—to ponder and reveal תולדות האדם (*toledot ha-adam*), *human features*, the tree that reveals *toledot ha-adam, the generations of Adam*, generating fruit to send forth into the world. *This is the book*—to understand concealed, deep knowledge that was transmitted to Primal Adam concerning the features of human beings. This lore was conveyed to King Solomon; it was bequeathed to him and he wrote it down in his book.[5]

“We have learned that Moses was perplexed by this [wisdom] until *Shekhinah* arrived and instructed him. She viewed and selected all the men with distinctive visages. It was there that Moses learned this wisdom, entering into it, as is written: ואתה (*ve-attah*), *And you, you shall behold from all the people* (Exodus 18:21). Of this it is also written ואתה (*ve-attah*), *And You, Your years never end* (Psalms 102:28); and ואתה (*ve-attah*), *And You, enliven them all* (Nehemiah 9:6); ואתה (*ve-attah*), *And You, O YHVH, are a shield around me* (Psalms 3:4). *And you, you shall behold* and examine this—you, and no other, to know and to gaze upon sixty myriads.[6]

“Six characteristics to examine in people’s faces, to fathom the wisdom clearly: by the hair, eyes, nose, lips, [70b] face, and hands—markings of the hands. Of these six characteristics is written *And you, you shall behold*.[7]

“*You shall behold*—by the hair—constricted ones of the forehead—above the eyes.[8]

“*From all the people*—by the eyes: by the eyelids, the eyes, and the furrows below the eyes.[9]

“אנשי חיל (*Anshei ḥayil*), *Men of vigor*—with חילא (*ḥeila*), vigor, to stand poised in the palace of the King—the face, by the glow of the face, facial wrinkles, facial markings, and beard.[10]

“*Hating bribery*—in the hands, markings upon the hands, and tracings there.[11]

“All six features are alluded to here, transmitted to Moses for the purpose of examining and understanding concealed wisdom, and this wisdom is bequeathed to the truly righteous, fittingly. Happy is their portion![12]

“It is written: *You have clothed me with skin and flesh…* (Job 10:11). In this same way, the blessed Holy One fashioned above: rungs upon rungs, these upon those, concealments within concealments. These are sinews and tendons, those are bones—established permanently among the rungs of man.[13]

“These that are called *flesh*—rungs and sovereignty of End of All Flesh. All those who benefit from flesh, from the aromas of the sacrifices, and others who govern flesh. Above it all is *skin*, stretched like the spreading sky. This is the extension of skin, covering all.[14]

“Just as the blessed Holy One fashioned stars and constellations in the expanse of the sky for discovery and examination, so did He form within human beings markings and furrows, like those stars and constellations, that one might learn and perceive great wisdom in them, to comport the body accordingly. Just as the appearance of the stars and constellations shift in the expanse of the sky, as a result of worldly affairs, so too the appearance of markings and lines in the skin of a human being change, depending on one’s deeds from moment to moment. These matters were transmitted only to the truly righteous, to know and to learn great wisdom.[15]

“*This is the book of the generations of man* (Genesis 5:1). From moment to moment according to one’s deeds—thus they are engendered, inscribed, and transmuted. When Holy Spirit dwells within him, inscriptions are generated; and tracings of that Spirit appear externally. But when Holy Spirit withdraws from him, an impure spirit arrives. Then that spirit clatters within him, outwardly manifesting well-known features and markings, recognized in him through the furrows on his skin, displayed outwardly, even though [71a] the hair and the forehead and the indentation over the mouth and eyes—all these signs—remain stable in their positions.[16]

“ז-ר-ה פ-ס-ץ (*Zayin, Resh, He, Pe, Samekh*, [final] *Tsadi*). This is the letter, according to this lore, that is always exchanged with זין (*zayin*), a term depending on hair. Your mnemonics: ‘Samson’s weaponry and armaments in the hair.’ This is the meaning of ‘for the crown of his God is upon him.’ Hair—unchanging for the sake of recognition, and hanging. This

one is in the letter *zayin*—*tsadi* joining with it. This one enters, issuing ס (*samekh*).[17]

"Hair hanging, black; and there are three lines on the forehead from the right side and two from the left, not conjoined; and on the right there are three slender markings crossing over it, pathways traversing those other lines; and on the left side there are five, with a short one among them:—

"This one is in the letter *zayin* and final letter *tsadi*.

"Then you find heavy eyebrows above the eye sockets, connected to each other:—

"This is an angry person, but not hastily so, assuaged over time. He considers himself wise, but he is not so. Head erect, always watchful, outwardly belligerent, but not in his household. He does not deign to look into the Torah. Others' words are like a burden to him, and he responds to them harshly.[18]

"If the eyebrows are separated, touching and not touching, then on the right side there will be two large lines and one small line, with two small markings intersecting them in the width; on the left side, two—one large and one small, with one small marking entering one, but not reaching the second:—

"This one is an angry person, quick to be filled with anger, and quick for his anger to subside; belligerent in his household, not at all pleasant. Only rarely does he respond stridently to people. Looking downward, his forehead is furrowed with anger, appearing dog-like, but at once it subsides and smoothness returns. This is a person whose spirit and ambitions are driven toward business, *tribute, poll-tax, or land-tax* (Ezra 4:13), and through his efforts his fortunes increase—for *tsadi* has been switched for *samekh*.[19]

“If the eyebrows are separated from each other with other short hairs entering in between:—

“This is someone who always bears a deep grudge. He is pleasant in his household, and happy, [71b] but melancholy with other people.

“This one is between final *tsadi* and *samekh*.

“He stashes his money. He avoids revealing his actions or having his behavior exposed. He is stingy.

“His hair, all intertwined, hanging down:—

“He does not concern himself with proper attire, and what he wears is ill-fitting.[20]

“Broad forehead, with three lines on the right and four on the left, two markings intersecting between them:—

“This one, when he speaks, the skin of his forehead smooths out and these lines are barely seen. He bows his head when walking. His right is his left, his left, right:—

“Always melancholy, depressed. A slanderer. Deems himself wise in all his doings. Quarrelsome with all those engaged in Torah.

“On his left arm there is a black mark with four short hairs in it, and two large ones hanging from it—red ones.[21]

“Smooth hair, hanging down, neither red nor black; his forehead, neither broad nor narrow:—

“This one is between the letter *samekh* and final letter *tsadi*, comprised within the letter *zayin*.

“One wide line on his forehead, extending widthwise from this side to that; two other markings, not so deeply ingrained, not embedded from this side to that one like this other; four little crinkles located between his eyebrows on the bridge of his nose:—

“Such a person is joyful, sage, insightful, generous with his money. At whatever he strives to learn, he is adept. Quick to anger, and quick to be appeased, never bearing a grudge. Sometimes noble, other times less so—balanced.[22]

“When he returns to his Lord, He grasps his hand, and he rises to great honor. All depend upon him:—

“The letter *samekh* travels toward him more frequently than the final letter *tsadi*.

“All who offer him perverse advice are unsuccessful; such counsel does not endure, and he cannot be corrupted. He appears to be a deceiver, but he is not:—

“The letter *samekh* and final letter *tsadi* joust over him, and consequently he ascends and descends. When he returns to his Lord, *samekh* is victorious and his wishes are all fulfilled:

“He is merciful, weeping when filled with compassion.

“He has one mark on his right arm—like a face—utterly hairless.[23]

“If he has curly hair, not extending below his ears, but curled above his ears:—[72a]

“Such a person is true to his word.

“His forehead is broad, though not exceedingly so, with five markings upon it, three spanning this side to that, two not:—

“He is belligerent, and even more so in his home. All his actions are performed impulsively. He appears virtuous, but is not so. He boasts of qualities he lacks:—

“He is in the letter *zayin* alone, rarely ascending to the letter *tsadi* alone, touching and not touching. He does not encompass the letter *samekh* at all:

“Verbally forgiving, but no more. He barges in where he is unfit. Whoever collaborates with him must be wary of his greed, but will be successful with him.[24]

“Hair hanging, coarse and abundant; five markings upon him, touching and not touching each other; his eyes aglow, perceptive:—

“His head bowed, he appears virtuous and righteous, but it is not the case. He boasts when delving in Torah as if

he were a great man, who conquers his [evil] impulse. When he speaks he scrunches his nose and smooths out the skin of his forehead. All of his actions are for others to see. He is financially successful, but duplicitous in all he does. He is a slanderer. He knows how to guard himself from other people in all matters. There is madness in him, and he covers up whatever he does. He enters altercations with a whisper.

"He has large ears, located in their positions below his hair:—

"He is within the final letter *tsadi* and the letter *zayin*, and consequently his actions are performed for others to see.

"Between his shoulders hang three hairs, with no markings at all:—

"Whoever collaborates with him will not succeed, though he is successful through his trickery. He appears virtuous to others, who consider his public actions sincere.[25]

"Curly hair hanging below the ears (if he is a youth, there will be one marking on his forehead and three furrows on the bridge of his nose between his eyebrows):—

"He is joyful, perceptive in everything. He is a deceiver, forgiving, pardoning those who draw close to him:—

"He is within the letter *samekh* and the letter *zayin*.

"When he gets older, they switch—*zayin* at the top and the letter *samekh* with him: then he is forgiving only within his household; he is financially successful; but not a deceiver, restraining himself from that path.[26]

"Over his left eyebrow there is one small mark—where he was struck in his youth by another person; his right eye is sealed; five furrows on the bridge of his nose extending between his eyebrows; short, curly hair on [72b] his head; crinkly eyes:—

"He is solely in the letter *zayin*:

“He is thoughtless—madness in his heart, feverish in his actions.[27]

“One line on his forehead and four short ones:—

“He is untrustworthy—no one should join him in partnership, for he will not succeed. He is a sinner before his Lord in all his actions.

“He has one small protrusion on his left thigh—sometimes expunged, and sometimes prominent.

“If he has four lines on his forehead:—

“He has all these characteristics except for this growth.

“If he has three large ones and three short ones with beautiful hair:—

“He is an even person.[28]

“Here ends the secret of hair.

“The forehead is interpreted by hair and by eyes. The eye is interpreted by hair according to four characteristics: by the pupil; by the colors of the eyes; by the white of the eyes; and by the black of the eye.[29]

“All of these examinations with all these six features, as we have discussed, pertain only from thirteen years and above, when holy spirit has separated from impure spirit. Other than with regard to lines alone, for lines—whether they are small or large—are constantly changing; and similarly with all of them.[30]

“It is written: *Moses chose men of caliber from all Israel…* (Exodus 18:25)—he had searched based upon those other criteria but found none. Similarly, *Get you wise and understanding and knowledgeable men for your tribes* (Deuteronomy 1:13). What is the meaning of *knowledgeable*? For they were recognized through these signs, and they were found, but *understanding* ones were not found.[31]

“Eyes by the mystery of the letter *resh* and the letter *pe*, with white eyebrows and red hair:

“If his eyebrows are white, this is one of whom others should be wary; all his words are deceitful. He is clever, retaining enmity:—

“He is solely in the letter *resh*—the letter *pe* not joining with him. (This letter travels and flits around him, but does not settle upon him.)

“His eyes are sunken, and he is frantic in his actions. (Similarly with anyone with sunken eyes, one must be wary of him.)

“In all his doings, he is a deceiver; and through his deception he provides rationales for his words.[32]

“His forehead is broad, but not rounded; two large markings cross his forehead widthwise, from side to side, with four small ones; his hair hangs down:—

“He is coolheaded and perceptive.

“He has small ears; abundant hair on his arms; he is mottled with blotchy, [73a] black spots. If the marks are red:—

“Sometimes he returns to noble behavior; and he sustains this for a short period, sometimes reverting to his decrepitude; he is a lecher.[33]

“Seed of David is the inverse. King David inherited this magnificent redness to execute judgment, and to manifest the beauty of his activities. His eyes are eyes of compassion, ensconced in perfection, grace and loving-kindness ascending. A yellow streak runs through them. When he is engaged in battle, that streak transmutes, becoming red as a rose. When his anger subsides in the fight, that streak resumes its former state.

“Great miracles occurred in his eyes, bringing joy, and inducing a yearning to see them. Flecked with three colors, they brought heartfelt rejoicing to the hearts of all. But

sinners who looked upon them would quake in terror—panic and fright rising in their hearts.[34]

"His forehead is broad and beautifully rounded, all letters seen and rising upon it—some ascending, some descending. Those descending will rise, these providing a place for those. Consequently, his markings ascend upward, lengthwise.[35]

"His eyebrows manifest compassion, neither black nor red, but rather between those two colors. In his pupil can be seen all faces of the world. A red streak surrounds it, and delight circles around all.

"At first when sinners approached to see those eyes, they saw them smiling, compassionate, gracious, and loving—but afterward, might and terror, panic and fury. His eyes are like doves toward them. What is the meaning of יונים (*yonim*), doves? They oppress the sinners, as is said: לא תונו (*lo tonu*), *Do not oppress, one another* (Leviticus 25:17), and *Your eyes are doves* (Song of Songs 1:15), both drawing near and distancing. All faces of the world are encompassed within his face.[36]

"The hair of his head was streaked with color, seven types of gold. But I saw the following in the Book of Primal Adam: the countenance of the messiah ranks higher than the moon. His color, greenish gold—in his face; his color, gold from Ophir—in his beard; his color, gold from Sheba—in his eyebrows; his color, gold from Parvaim—in his eyelashes; his color, beaten gold—in the hair of his head; his color, glistening gold—on his chest, on his breastplate; his color, gold of Tarshish—upon his two arms. All these seven colors were [73b] streaked through all the strands of his hair.[37]

"Engraved and embossed upon his right arm is a single marking, hidden from other people: a tower engraved with a lion, and a small א (*alef*) imprinted within it. The mnemonic—*A thousand shields hang upon it* (Song of Songs 4:4). Whenever he is engaged in battle, this mark rises,

protruding, and on the tower the *alef* pulsates; then he is strengthened for combat. When he enters a clash, the lion pounds—and then he triumphs like a lion, victorious in skirmishes. That tower speeds him on, its mnemonic: *a righteous one runs into it, secure* (Proverbs 18:10). *Secure*—David from his enemies, unable to defeat him. Some of these markings were inscribed upon his left arm. Markings of other people are not like these.[38]

"One who has glowing, split eyes:—

"He has madness in his heart.

"Broad forehead, abundant hair hanging way down from his head:—

"He is perceptive—his mouth spouting grand pronouncements.

"His lips are wizened:—

"He is masterful at evil speech.[39]

"On his forehead are three lines. If in his eyes there are two red veins:—

"He is solely in the letter ר (*resh*).

"If there is a small vein glistening alongside it:—

"Transgression looms before him, but he is saved from it.

"If there is a single red vein inside his eye, running lengthwise, and two small ones below it, with another crossing over it:—

"He sustains a perverse fantasy about a forbidden woman. (If that fantasy persists, a single line appears lengthwise along his forehead from his right eyebrow, one hair and four small ones below it, and one intersecting them widthwise. If he avoids that sin, two fine veins will appear within his eyes, traveling across the eye's width without anything crossing between them; similarly for the forehead. Once he has shunned that intention, after a period of nine

days, from then onward those markings will disappear, and others will be generated.)[40]

“Small eyes, turning slightly reddish:—[41]

“This one is insightful. All of his words—contentious and hostile.

“On his forehead you will find three markings: a large one crossing from one side to the other, and two others that do not cross over; he has large eyebrows:—

“He is a difficult person: when he speaks, his nose wrinkles—from anger or hard-heartedness. A bad reputation hovers over him, and he is wicked in the eyes of all, everyone hating him. Sometimes he is successful and sometimes not.

“Three large hairs [74a] upon his chest, over his heart; he has wizened lips:—

“He is arrogant—almost insanely so—and has a wicked tongue.

“His hair is smooth, long, and abundant; he is somewhat long-faced and somewhat round-faced:—

“Occasionally he regrets all his actions, but then returns to his degradation.

“In his eyes, you will find two veins in his right eye and one in his left eye. He has small ears, well-placed.[42]

“Seed of David is the inverse. For the seed of David, all these features are favorable and perform nobly. Except for thick lips—for whoever has thick lips is a slanderer against both righteous and wicked; unless one is wholly righteous, and then through his merit he is victorious and protected.[43]

“Green eyes with hints of red crossing between them. On his forehead, two markings extending from this side to the other, a small one above and another below:—

“He is in the letter פ (*pe*) and the letter ר (*resh*).

“His forehead is large and rounded:—

“He is good to all, bestowing from all he has to everyone. He is forgiving.

“Smooth hair, hanging—on the right side he has white hair from the day he was born.[44] [74b]

“White eyes with redness at the socket edges:—

“This one is in the letter פ (*pe*) and the letter ר (*resh*), combined as one.

“He has a broad forehead with three lines rising on it and six other little ones; it is red, but not so red, located between two hues—his hair likewise; he has a large face; curly hair but not extremely so, hanging a bit below his ears:—

“He is a fine person, a master of faithfulness and a master of fierce anger. When he rages, the redness below his eyes spreads out in his eyes—dreadful fury. When he speaks sharply, he seals his mouth, smoke pouring out of his nostrils. After a while his anger abates, though not completely, extending for a day or two. Sometimes he is successful, sometimes not; but he is generally successful, marginally or markedly.[45]

“If the redness at the edge of his eyes is thin like a thread—not spreading through his eye during an angry episode—and he has all of these features:—

“He is fainthearted, intimidated by all. [75a] His sleep: unsettled. Constantly cogitating, anxious about all imaginings. He brings success to all. A master of debauchery, nonchalant about lewdness.

“Occasionally, he repents, becoming scared; and from that dread, cautious. Then a certain reddishness will appear in his right eye—like that at the edge of his eye—at the end of the slope of his eye; and one thin, red vein in his left eye. But if they switch—what was in his right for his left, and that which was in his left for his right—then he is corrupted, reverting, smashing chunks of ice to transgress.[46]

“Two wrinkles above his eye, and three below. On his left foot, on the middle toe, six hairs—but at another time, five. Now there are six, with a small one in their midst.[47]

“Black eyes with large bushy eyebrows, hairs piled on top of each other. Black eyes with yellow running through them—the yellow deeply embedded. This one has five lines on his forehead, two traversing from side to side [*Zohar Ḥadash* 35b] and three that do not cross:—

“This person is in the letter פ (*pe*) and the letter א (*alef*), comprising פא (*pe alef*) in its fullness. The letter ר (*resh*) is not within him at all.[48]

“If he has black hair, hanging, not smooth:—

“This person is always quiet, though attentive. Proficiently vile-tongued, his words bear fury, his mouth spouting bombast. He is successful, and not successful. Instigating strife in his household, unconcerned for the honor of others—he is one in his mouth and one in his heart, distorting his speech.[49]

“His eyebrows are slightly reddish. If he has a broad line beneath his eye extending to his nose on the right side, with two beneath it, one of which is smaller than the other:—

“This one had sexual relations with a menstruant in the last few days—and on account of his sin, he has been marked with these markings.[50]

“Between his shoulders, he has a single marking with four hairs in it—one in the middle, thick and hanging, and three other thin ones. Before this sin, he had three small ones and the one, marked, thinner and shorter than the others. That marking, beforehand, was black and the hairs were all white. Now, this is not the case, but rather the marking is black and one is red like the marking of a lentil in the middle. That hair which grew among the others was at first red and ended up white. If he repents, one will find in his right eye a whiteness, white within the blackness.[51]

“He has three lines crossing over, and two that do not cross over; and that marking is black, encircled by a red streak. Within that streak, one thin, black hair; and three hairs in the middle grouped as one:—

“He will become only slightly wiser through Torah study, and he will not succeed in his ventures.[52]

“If the yellow of his eyes is not a deep hue, and his eyes are black, with a small red line crossing between these colors:—

“He is in the letter פ (*pe*) in its fullness, and in the letter ר (*resh*) alone.[53]

“If on his forehead there are six lines, three crossing over and two that do not cross; hair that is coarse but not extremely so; hanging and not hanging:—

“This one interacts harmoniously toward all people. He is stingy, and joyless—even on joyous occasions he does not appear happy, but rather appears despairing.

“His left ear is sealed up. Of his teeth he has only three large ones above, providing space for those below:—

“He is trustworthy, but not so much.

“He has a long face, but not handsome. His voice is like a woman’s and his words are like a woman’s. He wipes his mouth as he speaks, and spreads his fingers as he talks. When he walks, he holds out a shred of a curtain in front of him so that no one should harm him. Of him is written *it is an abhorrence before* YHVH (Deuteronomy 24:4).[54]

“If one has green eyes with these features: a long, handsome face; black hair, plucked out at the top; a large head; and when he walks with his head bent, his eyebrows precede him. Of this is written *hold back your foot from their path* (Proverbs 1:15).[55]

“If he has large, green eyes:—

“This one is in two letters, ר (*resh*) and פא (*pe alef*)—one alone, one in its fullness.

“On his forehead there is one line that traverses, crossing from side to side, and three others that do not cross; broad forehead, his eyebrows are not large; his beard is bushy; he has a handsome, ruddy face; his hair is smooth, but not exceedingly:—

“Fearful of sin, loving Torah, and loving those who delve in it. He is joyful with all, and acts beneficently [35c] to all when it serves his interests. He is trustworthy regarding secrets of the Torah, and gracious regarding worldly matters. Whoever partners with him will not succeed, neither he nor the other. He is successful alone—this is caused by the letter ר (*resh*).[56]

“He has a disfigurement on top of his head—a depression resulting from a blow given him by a youth, without intention or objective, and covered over by hair—a depression in the shape of a Greek ג (*gimmel*):—[57]

“He is trustworthy with others—and rises up to be the head of the people.

“This completes the secret teaching of eyes.

“There are other secret teachings about eyes, different from those.[58]

“Deep-set, smiling eyes:—

“Such a person is in the consummation of letters, except that the first is ר (*resh*), followed by פ (*pe*):[59]

“This is a person who is successful in his deeds.

“One with three lines on his forehead, a rounded forehead; his eyes shine, versicolored with craftsmanship—their purity sustained by his perfection:[60]

“His enemies will topple beneath him. He is intelligent, successful at everything, swift in his actions. Gracious with others, he speaks sternly, fearlessly. He is forgiving. He behaves genially, but insincerely.

“His hair is smooth and hanging; his tongue, like a sword; below his eyes, three large wrinkles and three small ones; if he has four small ones and three large ones, then you will find two lines on his forehead, crossing from side to side, and three that meet but do not meet; below his navel is a marking in the shape of a human head—black and white, two hairs hanging from it:—[61]

“This man stumbled with the wife of another man a long time ago but has not repented of that sin—maladies pursue him. Of these, he has the urge to urinate but is unable to, for until now this transgression hangs around the neck of a twisted serpent, ruling over him with it. This happens near the end of his days, when he is elderly. If he repents when he is still vigorous, that marking’s image shrinks and no hairs hang from it at all. But if he repents at the end of his days when maladies pursue him, then that image becomes wrinkled, hairs dangle from it, and the sickness does not disappear from him because it is suspended from the neck of the serpent.[62]

“Once the sin is forged to that serpent’s neck, none can untie the knot. This is because the serpent is not permitted, from when the man was young, to fasten the sin to its neck. Once tied, it is fixed with strong bonds, and the serpent pursues that man, striking him on the selfsame covenant with which he sinned. Even if he has done *teshuvah*, he shrieks from the agony of the affliction. Then the serpent skips past, and brings that shackle into the pitch of the great depth, providing the man with tranquility. After some time the serpent goes forth and does this.[63]

“When that person dies, three hundred officers pursue him, grab him, and haul him before the King. The Holy King smashes those bonds and releases that sin from around his neck. Of this mystery is written *This iniquity shall not be purged from you until you die* (Isaiah 22:14); and it is written: *Your covenant with death will be annulled* (ibid., 28:18). Your covenant with death shall be abolished, as is

written: *For he said, I shall placate him with the tribute* (Genesis 32:21)—I will annul his rage. Then that man proceeds to that world cleansed of that sin, having received his punishment in this world.[64]

"If you say, 'How can it be construed that the iniquity of a married woman is the subject of this verse?' The answer is that it is written here *This iniquity shall not be purged from you until you die* (Isaiah 22:14), and it is written there regarding the prohibition of a licentious married woman *the man shall be clear of iniquity* (Numbers 5:31). It is also written regarding Abner and Ish-Bosheth: *you dare reproach me with guilt over the woman today?* (2 Samuel 3:8).[65]

"Further, *Look, rejoicing and merriment, killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine* (Isaiah 22:13), and it is written there *Such is the way of an adulteress: she eats and wipes her mouth* (Proverbs 30:20). It is also written: *except the bread that he was eating* (Genesis 39:6).[66]

"Now, it is written: *Whoever the dupe, let him turn aside* [35d] *here, and the senseless—she said to him. Stolen waters are sweet, and purloined bread is delicious. And he does not know what shades are there, in the depths of Sheol, her guests* (Proverbs 9:16–18). This is when he has not received his punishment in this world.[67]

"If he is found to have ancestral merit, his punishment for this sin will be in this world, as is said: *I will punish their transgression with the rod, and with plagues their wrongdoing* (Psalms 89:33). *I will punish*—bit by bit. *If in his disaster he screamed* (Job 30:24). *Inflicting the guilt of fathers upon sons* (Exodus 20:5)—minimizing, applying a bit to this one and a bit to that one. Then he and his father are saved from the punishment of that world, since the son confers merit onto the father.[68]

"Crossed eyes that do not look in the path of truth:—

“This one is in no letter at all. All letters fly away from him, for he is a master of the evil eye—his appearance distorted since that evil eye rules over him.

“If this person’s actions are appropriate, then it rules only over his eyes; but one must protect oneself from his eyes, because the Other Side rules over them. Those eyes lust after all wickedness and become its agents. Limbs of the body can triumph, but the eyes rule when they gaze.[69]

“One who wants to protect himself from this man should write י (*yod*) on his right hand and ז (*zayin*) on his left. Then he should utter *yod* before him, with its letters reversed—then he will be saved from him.[70]

“This is the one who corrupted the holy deed and consequently letters do not dwell upon him, having flown off from him. For he is from the green line that issues from emptiness, with the measurement of the lamp.[71]

“One should look upon the lines of the hand, both right and left; and in the mystery of lines of the hands you will discover this.

“One whose eye is dammed up, though not completely, and the other eye is open, has one of those defects:—

“This one is in the letter ר (*resh*) alone, in its fullness; and the letter י (*yod*) approaches him but does not reach him.[72]

“On his forehead three lines traverse, and a fine one that also crosses. One marking rises from his eyes toward his ears. Hair hanging and coarse, large eyebrows:—

“He is blemished from the Other Side, since his mother visited sorcerers when he was in her womb, going to the crossroads on the night he was born. In his first two years he fell ill and his face shrunk, so his mother went out at night with him and performed witchcraft on his behalf.[73]

“This one is joyous at festivities. He cannot be trusted. He praises himself for qualities that he does not have, is haughty, and speaks wicked falsehoods. He is forgiving; not

stingy at all. He is profligate in lasciviousness. Successful and not successful. Sharp-tongued.[74]

"If there is one broad line on his forehead and two fine ones:—

"This one frequents sorcerers, as his mother had done for him.

"The lines are switched—now ascending from the right eye to the left eye:—

"He is haughty, but no wickedness in him at all. He is stingy. Not a trace of lewdness in him. He is sharp-tongued.[75]

"On his lip is one very red mark, and one hair in the middle; toes of his left foot: some bent, some straight and extended; his eyes: oozing, green, constantly weeping:—

"This one cleaves to the letter פ (*pe*), but the letter ר (*resh*) does not dwell within him.

"This one has four lines on his forehead all crossing over; two fine ones from his eyes to his hair; two [broad] markings and three fine ones between his eyebrows:—

"Such a person walks with his head bowed. (He fits one category of three groups of markings, the markings of lepers—he is one of those types. This one is not impure to the extent that he needs to be quarantined.)[76]

"He takes delight in everything, constantly smiling, and people smile at all his words. He is stingy in his household, but not so with others. He has no shame in his words since he sees that everyone enjoys him. He is a philanderer.

"He has slightly reddish hair, neither smooth nor curly.

"If there are three lines on his forehead that cross over, and three small ones that do not cross; and he has all the other features; [36a] and he has a scar, a marking on his eye:—[77]

"(A man who had been hunting birds injured him unintentionally with a stick that he had been throwing at the birds. This one got slashed on his left eye, above his

eyebrow along the length. The one hunting birds threatened him with the stick because he was causing the birds to scatter, striking him unintentionally.)

“This one is successful providing food for himself and his household, but not in acquiring great wealth. He is trustworthy, but not exceptionally so—he is reliable with small matters, but with large matters he is unreliable. He is a consummate slanderer, everyone laughing at his remarks.

“He has a large mouth with thick lips:—[78]

“Whoever collaborates with him is successful in all matters, and he succeeds as well—he benefits every partner.

“The scar (from that gash) is accompanied by eyes that ooze and are green, with a black marking encircling them:—

“This one is in the letter פ (*pe*), complete in its two letters, and is in the letter ר (*resh*) alone.[79]

“This one has a large head, with four broad lines on his forehead and three small ones between his eyebrows; on his nose are long hairs; he has a large face and a round head, with one slightly broken [line] on top:—

“He is a mighty warrior, full of violent talk.

“His hair is curly:—

“He is a reprobate; and at night he seeks company for debauchery. Sometimes he stumbles with a forbidden woman.

“His beard is bushy. On his left arm is a scar from a sword: (He was slashed by a left-handed man, on the fourth day of the week, as the sun was setting. On that day a single ray from Mars aroused him. That ray is on the left side; and the marking, crooked in his flesh, is in a circle.)[80]

“When he reaches his old age, he will fall from his mount—whether a horse or a donkey—or fall from a wall, leading to his decline and death. For a foolish transgression that he performed during his youth chases after him. If this

man repents, he will fall during his middle years; and from the ensuing frailty, he will die. But if he repents during his youth, then there will be three broad lines on his forehead, and four fine ones, and two more. Two from inside his eyes, rising upward.[81]

"This one will depart the typical way: he will become sick, fall from his bed, and die—it always ends with a fall.

"Small, squinty eyes whose colors are not immediately detectable; but upon inspection, they are greenish black. This one has jagged lips and a long, pointy face. Then one will find on his forehead two lines and a fine one between them:—[82]

"This one is in the letter פ (*pe*) alone and the letter ר (*resh*) alone.[83]

"This one has hanging hair; it is not smooth:—

"He is successful in his handiwork, and—when he exerts himself—with Torah, too.

"He is short-limbed. He is not fat at all, but his spirit is inflated. His voice is nasal because he is congested. As a result, the air emerges forcefully toward the left side.[84]

"On his leg, above the knee, there is a scar (a wound from a knife-wielding youth, from his childhood, endangering his life):—

"He is so jealous regarding his wife that others mock him. He tries to resolve it by having others intervene, but it is left unresolved and he is ridiculed.

"No one should partner with this one, because he will not succeed. He is covetous, acquisitive of things he does not have. He thinks of himself as an important person, but that is not the case. He merits daughters but not sons.[85]

"But, if the lines are switched—with two fine ones and one broad one on his forehead—and he is ruddy-faced, then he gains sons and one daughter, who gives birth to a son and departs from the world.[86]

“If he has one [mark] behind his right ear, a blemish like a lentil, and one hair that hangs from the top of his ear, and his little finger of his left hand is bent: the daughter will survive, giving birth to sons and daughters.

“If it is she that has these features, [36b] she will crouch and one son will issue from between her legs—one among those who will be a spring flowing with Torah. He draws close to them, issuing springs and rivers of Torah; but in a few years he will be gathered up from the world.

“He is one of those thousand who were gathered up from the world from the beginning of the year until the beginning of the year, in the early days. After the destruction of the Temple, there were only sixty, less one, who departed from the world—wafting a fragrance—before their time. When the blessed Holy One enters to teach Torah to those children who departed the world—wafting a fragrance—before their time had come, they were the first to receive these words. The blessed Holy One asked that angel named Yofiel, enduringly forging links of Torah, ‘Who is the one that has come to me prematurely?’ This is as is written: *Who comes before me? I will requite* (Job 41:3). *I will requite*—actually![87]

“Then the blessed Holy One called for Metatron—he stands behind the curtain for the screen, sixty thousand myriads, Torah prodigies around him, tying wreaths for his Master. He asks him, ‘Who is this who precedes Me? *Who comes before me? I will requite*—is he enrolled in your academy or not?’[88]

“He replied, ‘Master of the Universe, he is not in my academy, but rather in Yours. Moreover, all those before me, beneath all the heavens, are yours, as is written: *beneath all the heavens he would be mine* (ibid.). For there are two academies above: the academy of the Youth, Metatron, and the supernal academy of the blessed Holy One. Wherever we learn about the supernal academy, it

refers to that of the blessed Holy One; heavenly academy, that of Metatron.[89]

"Then the blessed Holy One said to him, 'If so, pluck him for Me; pluck him so that I might scent him. This is as is written: *My love has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices* (Song of Songs 6:2). *My love*—the blessed Holy One, as is said: *My beloved is mine and I am his, he grazes among the roses* (Song of Songs 2:16). *Has gone down to his garden*—heavenly threshing floor, built like a threshing floor. *To the beds of spices*—academy of Metatron. *To graze in the gardens and to gather roses* (ibid., 6:2)—to examine and gaze upon his students. "What is the meaning of 'to pick roses'? Do not read שושנים (*shoshanim*), *roses*, but rather ששונים (*she-shonim*), *reciting*—these are the ones who waft their fragrance prematurely in this world, are gathered, and depart from this world before their time.[90]

"Then that Youth, Metatron, summoned Gabriel, scribal implements on his loins, saying to him, 'Write a missive and deliver it to the Angel of Death, indicating that so-and-so should be plucked from the world.' He is picked immediately. He is sent up first to the academy of Metatron, where he recites the lessons that he has brought in his hands, learning there what he learns. Afterward, he is sent up to the supernal academy of the blessed Holy One. He is brought to his seat, where he delights in those that are his, and in the celestial mysteries and interpretations of the Torah that are concealed in this world.[91]

"Yofiel, great angel, leaves the supernal academy, endorsing secrets and mysteries of the Torah from the midst of the two academies. Whatever confounds those in the heavenly academy is resolved by those in the supernal academy. In the supernal academy there are no questions or difficulties, only in the heavenly academy. He certifies the teachings of Torah from the two academies, fittingly. Of this is written *They will go from rampart to rampart* (Psalms 84:8). In the time to come questions and difficulties will

disappear within the heavenly academy, as is said: *they will go from rampart to rampart*, and as is written: *May there be peace within your ramparts, tranquility in your palaces* (Psalms 122:7).[92]

"This concludes the mysteries of the eyes, among the perceptible colors.

"Form of the nose. The nose is the completion of a human for the sake of identification.[93]

"A small, crooked, asymmetrical nose:—

"This is one who no longer has a human face. He is in the letter ה (*he*) alone, without completion:

"This is one who has the way of [36c] humility and wholeness withheld from him—he is brazen.[94]

"His hair is reddish-white; three large markings on his forehead, and three others that are not so visible; three other lines from this side to that side; he has thick lips:—[95]

"In his impudence he speaks harshly regarding whatever he wants, for the way of humility has disappeared from his nose and face. (For shame and humility straighten the nose on the face, but this one has none of these [qualities].) In his insolence he lies, laughing through his words.[96]

"If the lines have faded from his forehead, three broad ones and three fine ones, and his hair is black:—

"He is balanced between two letters:

"This one lowers his head and laughs through his words.

"His hair is smooth, but not extremely so:—

"Great afflictions are aroused for him, but he is saved from them all.[97]

"This slight merit comes from his father—who shields him, merit inscribed within the column upon which that Youth stands. (He attained that worthiness through an orphan, since every orphan and widow is sustained like a

deposit with Metatron, who presides as judge among the seventy of the Sanhedrin.)[98]

"In the Hall of Merit, all judgments of the world are rendered except for three: children, lifespan, and sustenance—all itemized in Scripture. Children: *She prayed above YHVH* (1 Samuel 1:10)—על (*al*), *above*, precisely! Above, above—place of supernal מזלא (*mazzala*), flux of destiny. Lifespan: *I hereby* יוסיף (*Yosif*), *He will add, fifteen years to your life* (Isaiah 38:5)—*He will add*, precisely! Sustenance, as is written: *Cast your burden above YHVH and He will sustain you* (Psalms 55:23)—על (*al*), *above*, precisely![99]

"People are judged there; and a writ is handed over to the Angel of Death to execute them and take their spirits. Since supernal guarantors and virtuous people are in the hands of the blessed Holy One, He instructed Metatron that this man's children and wife should be deposited with him. Since they cannot be used as guarantors—guarantors upon guarantors—they will not rise up.[100]

"Of this: one who saves them from their suffering, that merit will shield his children. He himself is one of those for whom that merit is a shield at a time of anguish.[101]

"This one has a marking on his forehead:—

"He is a sinner or a fornicator, but this goes unnoticed by people—they are oblivious. He is prosperous, and whoever collaborates with him will prosper even more.[102]

"Crooked nose with two huge orifices, nostrils pointing outward, though the nose does not slope upward:—

"This one is in the letter ה (*he*) in its fullness.[103]

"Four broad lines on his forehead, and six fine ones; large ears, large eyes, with two faint black flecks in his right eye; his hair is not properly arranged on account of its fullness and coarseness; a scar from a wound on his forehead:—

"This one is fiery, every day on the brink. When he explodes in rage, his nose cools and he appears pale. His

anger abates after a long while. He is trustworthy regarding significant matters, though not so with smaller ones. He is lustful. His body is full of pockmarks and blisters every day of the year, except for a short interval in the autumn. He conducts himself humbly in his household. He has a voracious appetite everywhere, even when he is not invited.[104]

"If he acquires Torah and teaches children, he earns ש (*shin*) and ת (*tav*) through them.

"On his right hand there is a deep cleft from a mark that he had from birth:—

"Two women are destined for him. The first will die in the travailing chair. The second will be privileged to have two sons. One will die young—in his mother's milk; and one will rise in the world more debauched than anyone else in the world. He has longevity, but not so much.[105]

"A nose that follows a straight line, well-proportioned on the face:—

"This one is in the letter ה (*he*) in its fullness.

"Revealed on his forehead are two broad lines and five small ones, as well as two from the right side leading toward his hair, traveling straight upward from below; his hair—blackish-red—hangs over his ears; large green eyes with a red streak circling within; he has a long face—he is called Eagle-Face:—[106]

"He is one of the sons of the full moon. [36d] When he seeks to diminish himself, he is deemed virtuous by his Master. He fears sin. In the days of his youth he was never sick, continuing in good health like a fearless warrior. In his elder days, he becomes diminished like the diminishment of the moon, weakening. Maladies pursue him, but this one is righteous—and through illness he gains atonement.[107]

"If the features are switched:—

"He will have the maladies during his youth, since he is like the moon when it longs to shine. Then this man will be

impoverished, but in his old age he will be free of sickness and will have wealth and tremendous honor; for then the moon shines, and he abides in fullness. This is ‘a righteous one who prospers.’ He is humble, beloved by God in all matters.[108]

“Long, sharp nose—sharp as the tip of an eagle’s beak:—

“This one is not in any letter at all.[109]

“His hair is curly; three lines on his forehead; he has a pointy face, small eyes:—

“He covets what others have. All his actions are void of fear of heaven. He hates the Torah and hates those who delve in it. Periodically he enjoys listening to words of Torah, but in an instant they elude him.

“On his left foot, two gnarled toes that cannot straighten, with another on his right foot:—

“This one has sinned through stealing, and will never repent of this sin.[110]

“Between his shoulders hang two long hairs, and from his chest three hairs hang down:—

“He swears oaths at every minute and hour, but it does him no good.[111]

“During two intervals a year a person can collaborate with him—no more—and prosper. These are from Adar until the beginning of Nisan, and from Elul through the sixth of Marḥeshvan, but no further. In these periods one who collaborates with him will prosper, for these are days of letters, and whoever lacks letters should join together with them.[112]

“During these days, naked souls go forth, returning as before. They do not have mates, but during these days, twenty-two letters issue forth, dwelling upon them, crowning them—with supplications, they find their mates. But in other months and intervals they do not. For from the seventh of Adar the lamp strikes, producing diminutive letters that split the firmaments and stream out into the

world. When they issue forth, all those naked souls that were poised to return, emerge with them, uniting with those letters.[113]

"And they venture forth with a guide. All people—when being prepared to be formed in this world—have all the letter-shapes traced within them, through the agency of the joining of those three partners who assemble the structure. Those that return now have all the letters traced within them, but others do not have them traced within them, since those guides do not form them with the letters as drawn before from the sides of the father and mother.[114]

"Those letters roam and wander in the world—joining with them, all those who do not possess letters—until the new moon of Sivan. Then, these are hidden, and supernal letters yearn to be revealed. From Elul on, those supernal ones are concealed, through the first six days of Marḥeshvan—when people repent of their sins, receive atonement, and letters return to their previous state.[115]

"Either way, those diminutive ones stream forth to sustain the world, and these bond with them—since they possess no letters whatsoever. From the beginning of Elul, *Teshuvah* presides and letters soar up to Her—people repent of their transgressions, returning to letters.[116]

"They preside over the world for two months and then vanish during Tevet and Shevat. From the seventh of Adar, those others depart, as was said. Whoever unites with them proceeds with love during these days. Two other months conceal them all—these are Tammuz and Av; and the days of horror go forth with their letters. They rule over the world while others are hidden. Consequently, on these days, happy is the one who is saved from them.[117]

"If the nose is long, and wide in relation to the head:—

"This one is in the letter ה (*he*); and sometimes [37a] the letter י (*yod*) bonds with it:

"This is a man who prospers.

“His face has lesions, scarred from blisters; his eyes are red; among the symptoms of leprosy: sometimes his eyes are teary.[118]

“Four furrows on his forehead, two crossing over, embedded like a lath on top of a brick; his hair is abundant: —

“This one is prosperous and fearful of sin. He aggrandizes himself in all qualities beyond his scope.

“When he shakes [his head], tears flow; his nose throbs until he expels green mucus (this being one of the more severe forms of leprosy):—

“One who collaborates with him will prosper. He is trustworthy in all matters.[119]

“On his left shoulder are three marks, two red and one black—but the black one serves a purpose, inducing him to draw near to other people and to join with them so that they will not think of him as a leper.[120]

“A blemish appeared on him one autumn evening in his youth. He was eating fish and drinking water, and then went outside. At that time Saturn was dominant in the world, and one of its offshoots emanated, spreading out below. This man stepped outside, head uncovered, and he was struck by Qurqafnei and Shamriron, two spirits that preside in that offshoot. This is how that man was afflicted—stamped with two red marks, and that offshoot stamped him with the black mark, since procedures of Saturn are enacted with black.[121]

“This mystery presides over the Sabbath day, but not over the holy people, because the holy people have no portion or inheritance from planets or constellations, but rather only in the blessed Holy One. Consequently, they must comport themselves joyously, with food and drink and clothing; and they must prepare their home and table for this day.[122]

“This is not the case for all those bonded to Saturn, for they must fast and display melancholy, anxiety, and fright, dressing in black—encased in black, refraining from meat, wine, and anointing. They should not partake of any worldly delights, but rather remain in their dwellings in sadness, avoiding people. Then those spirits, Qurqafnei and Shamriron, will be drawn upon him, informing him of worldly matters through the influence of Saturn.[123]

“I have seen in the Book of King Solomon that people who are born when this offshoot is dominant are always melancholy and never joyous, unless they are reciting Torah, which unites them with the blessed Holy One. In spite of all this, if he has foundations and roots from ancestral merit, he is able sometimes to overcome this offshoot that issues from Saturn, joining with [the blessed Holy One].[124]

“Then those two spirits leave and travel to a gash in the cliff where all naked spirits are gathered—those who may not enter [behind] the curtain of the King. They are naked in this world, and when they depart from this world they fly off to enter that world. But the gate is locked before them on all sides; and they find no tranquility until they leave to wander in the world. They are called by the name ‘dwellers.’[125]

“On the Sabbath, once the day has been sanctified, where do they go? Into the gash of a certain cliff, outside the walls of the Garden, in the outer palisades. They remain there the entire Sabbath; and afterward they depart, roaming in the world, conveying information to people in night visions.[126]

“When this offshoot triumphs over that particular person, those two spirits journey to that gash and wait there until the departure of the Sabbath. Once the Sabbath departs, those souls and spirits leave together, joining as one.[127]

“They proceed—the two spirits and the one soul, from the core of that man, from seventy rungs from behind. They hover over him—spirit after spirit—[37b] informing him of matters of the world: some true, some not true. True matters among them—from the side of the naked soul, finding tranquility there. Untrue—from the side of those spirits. Sometimes those spirits convey genuine messages regarding the near future.[128]

“This is a soul that will never find a redeemer from the seventy rungs from the rear. Saturn draws those spirits into this world, but on account of the soul, the man does not panic when they hover over him, nor does he tremble. Happy is the one who has ancestral merit to aid him in all these passages.[129]

“A crooked nose, sloping rightward:—

“This is a person who is inscribed in the letter ה (*he*) and sometimes in the letter ר (*resh*), but they are not joined together:

“He speaks pompously.[130]

“On his forehead, one broad line and four fine ones; small eyes, but not excessively so, turning red; hair hanging down, somewhat smooth:—

“He is from a long chain—he is suspended from it, and supported by it. He is trustworthy; successful in his labors.[131]

“This one has a defect, a deformation—he is a eunuch of the sun, or one of his testicles is suspended within his scrotum, such that he cannot ejaculate properly.[132]

“On his left hand, his little finger is gnarled and cannot straighten.

“Primal Adam said, ‘*My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in a secret place, knitted in the depths of the earth* (Psalms 139:15).’ From here we learn that holy soul derives from the coupling of male and female, coupling

of the King and *Matronita*. What is the meaning of *depths of the earth*? There are two depths for the place called *earth of delight* (Malachi 3:12)—the place where the soul of the male is formed for the right, and the place where the soul of the female [is formed] for the left.[133]

"Of this, arousal from the side of the female is necessary, as is written: *I roused him from the north, and he comes* (Isaiah 41:25). Then, *from the rising of the sun, one who invokes My name* (ibid.)—coupling of the sun with the moon, Jacob and Rachel. *He comes upon rulers like mortar* (ibid.)—forces of the world that radiated from Primal Adam.[134]

"Subsequently, *Your eyes saw my formless mass* (Psalms 139:16)—when I was laid out as an embryo, shapeless, from east to west. *Your eyes saw*—those destined to issue from me, for You are the One *who called the generations from the beginning* (Isaiah 41:4). *In Your book they were all inscribed* (Psalms 139:16)—*This is the Book of the Generations of Adam* (Genesis 5:1), of features. In this book of the righteous are engraved all features of the world, through permutations of the letters ז ר ה פ ס ץ (*zayin, resh, he, pe, samekh*, final *tsadi*).[135]

"They are all inscribed there in the forms of the furrows in the skin of Adam, like the firmament of the heavens, where the stars are fixed—*He who brings forth their array by number and calls them each by name* (Isaiah 40:26). For the seed of my servant Israel, *Jacob, whom I have chosen* (ibid. 41:8)—they are called *Adam*, as is written *You, My flock, flock of My pasture, are* אדם (*adam*), human (Ezekiel 34:31). The world was created on account of them, as is written: *Holy is Israel to YHVH, the first fruits of His harvest* (Jeremiah 2:3), for they arose in thought before the world was created. Of them all: *In Your book they were inscribed*.[136]

"*Days were formed* (Psalms 139:16)—for all those supernal days, like the number of משכו (*mishkhu*), *Draw, and*

take yourselves (Exodus 12:21). *Mishkhu*—upper days to shine upon lower days, 365 and a quarter days. Part of the day is like an entire day regarding the numerical value of *mishkhu*. One who draws from there conveys radiance to Moon, sanctifying Her.[137]

"*Not one of them* (Psalms 139:16)—alluding to David the Messiah, who had no days to shine, but he drew seventy years, as is said: *Look, mere handspans You made my days* (Psalms 39:6). What are טפחות (*tefaḥot*), *handspans*? ט פחות (*tet paḥot*)—טוב (*tov*), goodness, here since פחית (*paḥit*), diminished, were the days of Adam to contribute to David, who was טוב (*tov*), *goodly, to look on* (1 Samuel 16:12). His goodness came from Primal Adam, who acted charitably toward him so that David would be prepared to act charitably toward Israel. Just as David—poor and needy—received [37c], likewise did he give to the poor. All enacted justly, as is written: *David administered justice and equity to all his people* (2 Samuel 8:15).[138]

"They aroused that the beauty of our father Jacob was the genuine beauty of Primal Adam. For Jacob *dwelled in tents* (Genesis 25:27), learning in the academy of Shem, Eber, Abraham, and Isaac, to serve the blessed Holy One—since he is the first born. This is as is written: *My son, My firstborn, is Israel* (Exodus 4:22), and divine service was performed by the firstborn.[139]

"Assuredly, the Book of Primal Adam was in Jacob's possession, as were the Book of Enoch, and the Book of Formation of our forefather Abraham. In fact, they have aroused that the tractate of *Avodah Zarah* of our father Abraham had four hundred chapters. From all these books our father Jacob learned—*a complete man, dwelling in tents* (Genesis 25:27), abundant wisdom.[140]

"Jacob's beauty and lines were like the array of Primal Adam. Just as Primal Adam preceded creation and was the handiwork of the blessed Holy One, so too was Jacob first—

first in perfection. *Holy is Israel to YHVH, the first fruits of His harvest* (Jeremiah 2:3). His bed was perfect, unlike Abraham from whom emerged Ishmael and the children of Keturah—dross of silver. Nor like Adam, from whom issued Cain; nor Noah, from whom issued Ham; nor Isaac, from whom issued Esau, dross of gold. But Jacob's bed was perfect; and therefore YHVH chose him from all the nations, as is written: *For Yah has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel as His own treasure* (Psalms 135:4), and: *Indeed, YHVH's share is His people, Jacob His allotted possession* (Deuteronomy 32:9)."[141]

סתרי אותיות

Sitrei Otiyyot

SECRETS OF THE LETTERS

Rabbi Shim'on opened, "*Who can utter the mighty acts of YHVH or declare all His praise?* (Psalms 106:2). *Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? For it befits You, since among all the wise of the nations…* (Jeremiah 10:7).[1]

"Within inscribed letters, engraved upon the concealment of the impression of existence, chariots soar upward upon holy chariots. Each and every chariot rises up to an inscribed letter. When a letter is inscribed in its place, its chariot ascends within—each and every letter becoming actualized upon the station of its corresponding chariot.[2]

"Now this subject can be expounded, each and every letter according to the mystery of holy chariots, on the four sides of the world. Mystery of the first letter ascends and descends, soaring up with its crowns toward one hundred worlds. In tandem, י (*yod*) ascends within the Will of Thought, and is sealed away, obscure.[3]

"Covering it below, a nut veils Hidden One in its hiddenness—a chariot stationed beneath that hidden mystery. That letter abides, treasured away—a single point below. The nut stands upon six pillars, supporting it on six sides—those six sides treasured away within the nut.[4]

"From the side of that letter, a single, holy chariot emerges. This chariot is treasured away, revealed only when it shines with the splendor of the hidden nut—then the chariot is revealed. That chariot—concealed and

revealed. It radiates from the sparkling of the Lamp, when [the Lamp] metes out the measure beneath the first nexus. When measuring prevails, that spark shines—ascending and descending—bearing י (*yod*): the single point.[5]

"Then, the spark spreads out—radiating three other sparks, becoming supports beneath the lower tip of the *yod*. Next, radiating from the midst of the second nexus, another spark shines—ascending and descending—becoming a support beneath *yod* on another side. Then, the spark spreads out—radiating three other sparks, becoming supports on this side below *yod*. And then another spark radiates from the third nexus, causing the binding of Mystery of Dust to the measure of the Lamp.[6]

"Consequently, *yod*—supreme point—has nine pillars upon which it depends, all constituting the chariot for this letter. Then it shines and is borne by these nine pillars. Eight others shine forth from within, all abiding in the mystery of *yod*: supreme, concealed point.[7]

"Nine pillars below evoke and do not evoke names, for those nine are called אין סוף (*ein sof*), limitless—existing and not existing: unknown. They are invoked and not invoked: utterly imperceptible. They evoke names and do not evoke—mystery of [*I shall invoke the name YHVH*] *before you. And I shall grant grace to whom I grant grace and have compassion for whom I have compassion* (Exodus 33:19). None can fathom them or their names, nor has the compass of their ways been revealed. Thus, Moses could not master them because they preceded his rung. Of that primary spark is written *before you*. Similarly, all the pillars preceded his rung—he could not fathom the ways of the blessed Holy One since they all rise within Thought and their ways spread out from there to diverse sides, according to the will of the blessed Holy One: utterly unknown.[8]

“This letter ascends upward with these pillars. The unknown One who strikes, struck. *Ein Sof* shines and does not shine, descending, its source of illumination unknown. When it descends, the pillars are contained within it, and it extends. When it extends, one ray radiates, comprising them all, and they are enveloped within, like one who enters a palace. This palace is established enclosed on two sides, but exposed above. These nine [1c] pillars shine into the palace, and *yod* is treasured away within the palace, with those pillars.[9]

“The palace is called ה (*he*), prepared and not prepared, revealed and not revealed: not revealed at all. Inhering within this mystery: *yod* and all the pillars—for it is concealed, and all abide within it to be crowned.[10]

“[*He*] possesses five chariots that emerge from the shining of the Lamp when it rises back to its place—gathered in after the measurement was executed. These are called נפלאות (*nifla’ot*), wonders—נ פלאות (*nun pela’ot*), fifty marvels. This was the mystery that King David sought to fathom—the five chariots—as is said: *Uncover my eyes, so I can see fifty marvels* (Psalms 119:18). When these shine and ascend toward Her to be crowned, they are fashioned into fifty, shining into five below that emerge from [*he*].[11]

“These *fifty marvels* shine, raising *he* upward, where they are crowned and woven into the midst of nine other pillars—these nine ascending to *yod* above, above. When they descend—origin of their descent unknown—the ה (*he*) is crowned with ten in the mystery of *nun*, yielding *fifty*, and [the mystery of] *marvels*, five pillars within. Once crowned and extended, *he* returns from the mystery of *fifty* to the midst of the mystery of *he*. These five pillars spread out below; and [*he*] presides over them. When it shines upon them all, five other rays radiate from Her—transmuting, not transmuting—right and left.[12]

“From here on: the matter stands revealed, based upon the supreme mystery, in the mystery of the Holy Name—

becoming concealed, one within the other—perfecting the holy chariot.[13]

"These five are four: five, corresponding to five hidden pillars, and four, corresponding to the four sides of the world. Each and every one has its own chariot, and all the chariots fuse—each and every chariot—in a single light; each and every light is contained within these pillars. Each and every pillar is contained within *he*; and *he* is contained within those nine pillars. Each and every one is contained in *yod*—primordial, exalted point—so that all become one.[14]

"Thus, the chariots that rise up to *he*, from below to above, comprise twenty-five chariots. This is the mystery of יברכו כה (*yevarekhu khoh*), *will bless twenty-five* (Psalms 145:10)—from below to above.[15]

"From *he* and above, nine chariots stand alone, outside the count, extending up to the mystery of *yod*, all concealed within it.[16]

"From here onward: mystery of the Holy Name, crowned with those chariots, encompassing one within the other in these letters—יהוה (*YHVH*)."[17]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "The blessed Holy One is called 'One,' as is written: *YHVH our God, YHVH is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4). The blessed Holy One is called the first, as is written: *I YHVH am the first* (Isaiah 44:6). The blessed Holy One is called the last, as is written: *I am the last* (ibid.). Blessed is He and blessed is His name forever and for all eternity.[18]

"הא (*He*)—mystery of *I am* אחרון (*aḥaron*), *the last*—final *he* of the Holy Name. There is a holy chariot for the last one, as is written: *and with* אחרונים (*aḥaronim*), *the last ones, it is I* (Isaiah 41:4). *Last* and *last ones*—all contained in one mystery, these in those. Mystery of *he* comprises these four; and these four are called *last ones*, all enduring from the upper side and the lower side.[19]

"This chariot: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel. These four, with one point presiding above them, comprise *he*. And

it is called *he* only when it comprises the mystery of these four and the final point that dwells upon them. Mystery of this *he*: *dalet* plus that point resting above them, in the middle, forms *he*.[20]

"According to the mystery of Enoch, there is another *he* below, enduringly bonded with this *he*, and they are all one in one. Then one should weep—your mnemonic is אהה (*ahah*), *alas* (Joshua 7:7)—since evil surrounds below, encasing, like a *dalet*. It encircles those four and this one—harsh shell hovering over that point, shrouding it. Then moon is eclipsed, its glow shrouded, and permission is granted to judge the world with severe decrees. This is the mystery of final *he*: [2b] of the two of them, the point is within one *he*. Then judgment is rendered in the mystery of *This sentence by decree of the Watchers* (Daniel 4:14).[21]

"This chariot abides within final *he*, and they never separate from one another. Wherever Michael, chief of these [angels], is found, there too is *Shekhinah*—everything linked to one another, bound within that point, all within *he*.[22]

"When there is only a single *he* preceded by *alef*, or by *yod*, and She bears a point, then the point comes to benefit the world—ה א (*alef he*) or ה י (*yod he*). In that case, the evil shell is shattered before it, not encasing it. *Alef* and *yod*, abiding in this mystery.[23]

"Similarly, regarding every holy name with inscribed letters: each letter has its own chariot abiding within it, within that name, upon which the name stands. That chariot is its support, for there is no king who advances without his troops—never alone. Of this is written יהוה צבאות (*YHVH Tseva'ot*), *YHVH* of Hosts—all as one, for chariots never separate from the Holy Name, and each and every letter contains its chariot within it. Thus, the totality comprises the Holy Name.[24]

"This *he* has a chariot among those rulers below, since this letter is revealed and it is smaller than its fellows. But

all those other letters do not have chariots that comprise lower ones within the letters—only this one—for this letter is encompassed among external, lower ones. These other letters contain holy chariots that are not external, except when palaces join with palaces, lower ones with upper ones—they are not encompassed within those letters to become one letter.[25]

"Thus, each and every letter of the Holy Name contains its chariot within it, and each and every one of the holy names contains its chariot within it. This is the Holy Name, as is fitting. The same is true for each and every letter of those four: they are the mystery of the chariot for the One who is unknown. Each and every letter contains a chariot within it, inscribed within that letter—actually![26]

"This *he* is twelve, and with the point presiding above it, thirteen—Thirteen Attributes of Mercy below like the pattern above. These twelve—twelve boundaries: on the four sides of the world, three on each side. These three comprise nine on each side: on the east side, nine; on the south side, nine; on the north side, nine; on the west side, nine; with the point that presides over them appearing in the middle. This point consummates each side as ten, since it stands in the middle: on the east, ten; on the south, ten; on the north, ten; on the west, ten—ten *sefirot* on each side. These are the forty letters that abide in the mystery of בראשית (*bereshit*), *In the beginning* (Genesis 1:1), below, in the mystery of the Holy Name, plus two handles for unification on the right and left—all abiding in the mystery of *he*. Now it is apparent that this *he* is present within all these supernal mysteries: holy chariot; these twelve; mystery of ten *sefirot*; and mystery of forty-two letters engraved in the Holy Name—all contained in the image of *he*.[27]

"They are all arranged diagonally in the mystery of the point that stands in the middle, balancing them according to the straight path—this side with that side. Similarly for

all four sides, standing in the scale of balance—scale poised to rectify all.[28]

"Through this mystery all those lower entities are created and perfected, as is written: *God said, 'Let us make a human in our image, according to our likeness* (Genesis 1:26). נעש ה (*Na'as he*), *Let us make he*—actually! This is *he*, and all those mysteries that exist below, united with it, bear its image—truly! This is why it is called הא (*he*), here (excluding those united above that cannot be envisioned in its image at all, nor inscribed within it for viewing).[29]

"When [2c] She is called *he*, She manifests all those mysteries—She is everything. This is why this point resides in the middle, for it is united with all: those on the east side are united with it, and it with them; those on the south side are united with it, and it with them; those on the north side are united with it, and it with them. Thus it is within all, all within it—all constituting *he*. Of this is written *Let us make Adam*, and it is written *God said*—all in the supernal mystery, fittingly.[30]

"All these mysteries and all supernal mysteries are manifest in these letters. They are inscribed within this letter—truly!—to unify the Holy Name fittingly. It is all a supreme mystery of the Holy Name. Up to now, celestial wisdom has been alluded to in the mystery of *he*, last of the four letters. Happy is the lot of one who has entered and emerged, knowing the paths of the blessed Holy One—entering without shame into the world that is coming![31]

"Mystery of וו (*vav*)—holy, supernal chariot, enduring in consummate existence. Split into two letters—two *vavs*, this *vav* like that one—twelve exalted mysteries. Upper *vav* exists in five exalted columns upon which upper *he* stands. This *vav*—even though it is six and the mystery of six, it is five and the mystery of five. All is as is fitting.[32]

"Commencement on the right axis: mystery of primordial light. Standing on a single chariot, comprised of

threes, not four. And even though there is no chariot without four, everything here is according to the mystery of threes like the letters of the Holy Name. This letter *vav* absorbs everything, third of the Holy Name; therefore, everything proceeds in threes.[33]

"Letter *he* (of which we spoke) is fourth of the letters, hence its chariot has four. Even though it exists in four, it proceeds according to threes. Everything proceeds according to the upright path, reckoning this one like the pattern of that one, to become one.[34]

"Chariot of the south side (which is the right side)—that chariot is in three, emerging from the Lamp. When רוחא (*ruḥa*), a wind, picks up, wafting twelve fragrances of incense—wafting fragrance and not wafting, comprised of three colors—it beams its glow, which is absorbed within. One glistens with fire, one glistens with water, and one glistens with רוחא (*ruḥa*), air. Then this one branches out, becoming three. When this air divides, becoming three colors, they are not fire, not water, not air. Rather, when this air divides, each and every one shines and glistens, strengthening the station above, then fashioned into a column below. One color glistens, strengthening fire—contained in the right. Another color glistens, strengthening water—contained in the right. Another color glistens, strengthening air—contained in the right side. These three colors are a single chariot for the right side, in the mystery of *vav*.[35]

"These are epithets of the blessed Holy One, in the mystery of the names by which He is called. Further, the name of the blessed Holy One is uttered with many names; and all those epithets are contained within each and every one of those exalted sides—which are the names that may not be erased.[36]

"This side (the right) is called אל (*El*), and its chariot, in totality, is called גדול (*Gadol*), Great. When they divide—within this chariot—into their constituent three colors, they are called by these names: גדול (*Gadol*), Great; חסין (*Ḥasin*), Strong;

קדוש (*Qadosh*), Holy. These constitute the chariot for the right, called *El*—supernal mystery from among those ten names, as we have established. These three colors—chariot for the right side—glisten and shine below. Each and every one of these three colors branches off—two others for each side, yielding a sum of three threes: nine. The right, riding above them, completes them as ten. Moreover, they are called *sefirot*—large and small—all attributes of the blessed Holy One.[37]

"Two emerge from one color—one [3b] called חנון (*ḥannun*), Compassionate, and one רחום (*Raḥum*), Gracious—[called] *El*, and they are from the color strengthened by water. Of the two that emerged from the color in which fire is strengthened, one is called ארך אפים (*Erekh Appayim*), Slow to Anger, and one is called רב חסד (*Rav Ḥesed*), Abounding in Kindness. Of the two that emerged from the color in which air is strengthened, one is called חסיד (*Ḥasid*), Kind One, and one is called סולח (*Sole'aḥ*), Forgiving. In the mystery of the Book of Enoch, this one is called Good and that one is called Upright. Your mnemonic—*Good and upright is YHVH* (Psalms 25:8).[38]

"From these, lights branch off below, all chariots for one another. All epithets are external, but they do not cleave to those upward—all comprised within the right side. They are all one in relation to this side—all in the mystery of the letter *vav*.[39]

"Commencement on the left axis: mystery of darkness spreading out in gloom below until Geihinnom is created from it, flashing from the murk of blazing red-black fire. Severe sparks flashing here—streaming and flowing downward, all from the midst of the darkness, which is the left, toward that side.[40]

"When the Lamp rises during the course of the measuring of the flow, it shines toward the right side. From that side, a glow shimmers toward the darkness. Lights

approach that pyre, drawing close to the blaze, conducting it closer to the right; and it is illuminated by them.[41]

"Then another spirit emanates and shines from the midst of the Lamp, glistening and flashing. It branches out to become a chariot for the left side—spreading out in the mystery of three colors—toward that side called North. That spirit does not waft incense nor fragrance at all, since the left is supported by that spirit that differentiates in these three colors. These are the colors that shine on three sides of fire (the left side): fire, the color of gloom; fire, the color of red; fire, the color of black. These three colors branch off from the spirit that issued from that Lamp—supports for two sides.[42]

"One color flashes, gloom-colored fire strengthened within it—on the left side. Another color flashes, red-colored fire strengthened within it—on the left side. A third color flashes, black-colored fire strengthened within it—on the left side. These three colors are a single chariot for the left side, in the mystery of the letter *vav*.[43]

"These are the epithets for the blessed Holy One in the mystery of the left: one is called אדיר (*Adir*), Majestic; one is called חזק (*Ḥazaq*), Strong. All in a single totality called גבור (*Gibbor*), Mighty, because this side—called Left—is *Elohim* (and we have already established that several sides are called *Elohim*).[44]

"These three colors on the left side flash and shine below. Each and every one of these three colors splits into two others on each side, until they arrive at a sum of three—yielding nine, as we established regarding the other side; with the left riding upon them, ten is complete.[45]

"Two emerge from within the color contained in fire—color of gloom: one is called Judge, and one is called Arbiter. This is as is written: *God is judge* (Psalms 50:6), and *Arbiter of widows* (ibid., 68:6). Two emerge from within the color contained and strengthened in red fire: one is called *Mighty in Strength* (Job 36:5), and one is called *Man of War*

(Exodus 15:3). Two that emerge from within the color contained and strengthened in the color of black fire: one is called *Inflicting Guilt* (Exodus 34:7), and the other is called *Dealing Retribution* (Isaiah 66:6).[46]

"From here they branch off below into diverse, innumerable גבורן (*gevuran*), powers—all from these three colors, as has been said. Of this is written *Who can utter* גבורות (*gevurot*), *the powers of,* YHVH*?* (Psalms 106:2)—for they are innumerable, all comprised within the left side. The blessed Holy One is called by all these [names], and they are all chariots below for each and every side—everything contained in the mystery of the letter *vav*. Each and every one of these four letters in the mystery of the Holy Name stands upon holy chariots, supported by their supports, all inscribed [3c] upon them—each and every one fittingly. These chariots are epithets for that name upon which they are based.[47]

"Therefore whoever comes to unite the Holy Name must know—in each and every one of these names—these epithets: in which name does it inhere, and which name rules over it. For they branch off from here below, until they arrive at those rulers, appointees—chariots below. They are all apprehended in the mystery of the name that rules over them, through that side where the chariots abide. All exists in the mystery of the Holy Name, through these four letters, by which the blessed Holy One is called. Happy are the righteous, for they follow the straight path—happy in this world, and happy in the world that is coming![48]

"Commencement on the middle axis is at the eastern opening (since the eastern opening is in the middle). It receives the two sides, joining them with bolts and doors, on this side and that. This opening comprises all those we have mentioned; and it stands upon the supernal chariot—the chariot that inheres in the mystery of *vav*. This is *vav*, encompassing them all, abiding within the mystery of all six

supernal sides. Standing upon a single chariot—three on the right and on the left. Issuing from the midst of the lamp when emitting a spirit, wafting twelve fragrances of incense—wafting and not wafting. This spirit glows with its luminosity; this spirit is perfect—and is called 'Consummate.'[49]

"When this spirit differentiates, it branches off into three colors, flashing with fire, water, and air—as stated regarding the right side. When it branches off, each and every one glistens in its place, strength provided by this spirit to the light that differentiated from it. It branches out from this spirit in each of those three directions: one color glistens in fire, strengthening it; another color glistens in water, increasing it; third color glistens in air, making it glow like purple, glistening with these two sides. These three colors form a single chariot in the mystery of *vav*—this is the mystery of *vav*.[50]

"These are the epithets by which the blessed Holy One is called (as has been stated that the blessed Holy One is called by all these names). These epithets are contained within the mystery of the Holy Name designating this middle axis. And even though it is designated as the mystery of the letter *vav*, it partakes of all higher and lower names. Moreover, all four letters of the Holy Name are bound to it—since it conveys to all sides, above and below. This is the mystery of *YHV*. This name—*YHVH*—hinges here, grasping two letters above and one below. It stands in the middle, between upper and lower, and between two sides, as stated.[51]

"Its chariot is called Awesome in its totality. When this chariot (the spirit, as has been stated) branches out, it branches out into three colors, called Awesome, Truth, and Keeping Kindness. These are the very three that constitute the holy chariot for this axis, poised in the middle. These three colors—holy chariot of *vav*—glisten and shine below. Each one of those three colors branches out into two others

on each side, yielding a sum of three, three on each side. These nine—together with the Holy Name presiding over them—completes ten.[52]

"Each and every one of these sides comprises three, as stated—right, left, and middle. Each and every one is in the mystery of its chariots, comprising ten, because all, above and below, are in a single perfection. These are the ten *sefirot*, ten utterances. As a result, each and every one of those sides totals ten, and from there to an immense number, for chariots branch out to every side until they all amount to an enormous number.[53]

"Come and see: all these chariots, when they branch out to their sides, are called by the name that presides over them, and by the mystery of that letter below—actually![54]

"Two radiate from a single point: one is called Bearing Crime, [4b] and one is called Overlooking Trespass. These are the ones from the color that strengthens water. Two radiate from the color that strengthens fire: one called On High, and one called High Place.[55]

"In the Book of Enoch, these names are comprised within the mystery of World that is Coming, while here on this side is the epithet Examines Hearts. On High, as is said: *majestic on high is YHVH* (Psalms 93:4), and *Your judgments on high are beyond him* (ibid., 10:5). Even though this name abides in World that is Coming, *on high* is also written here. In this manner, World that is Coming joins in all these, and this one is called *Elohim* as is the pattern on the left—and it is all one.[56]

"Third color—air is strengthened within. These are the two that radiate from it: one is called Dwells Forever, and one is called Holy. From these, lights branch off below—all chariots for one another. They are all epithets by which the blessed Holy One is called, all known by the side ruling over them.[57]

“In the same manner, there are three sides that flow from within the upper sides (which have been discussed)—right, left, and middle. They stream outward from them, and two of them are external. They all convey chariots as did those above, but they are not as exalted as the latter. Those below that flowed from those upper sides (as mentioned) are like that other array: one is called Right, one is called Left, and one stands in the middle—in the midst of that middle (as mentioned). They are all comprised within those three supernal ones, and they are all comprised within the mystery of *vav*—which embraces them all.[58]

“They all branch off into known chariots on their respective sides; but they are not called by distinctive names other than the epithets below, similar to those epithets above. These lower ones join with the upper ones, and these three others are all external chariots, as has been established.[59]

“Come and see: These two columns are external supports—right and left—and they are called *Acts of Love for David* (Isaiah 55:3). Those צבאות (*tseva’ot*), hosts, are their chariots—two that are enduring and executing their charges through prophets of truth.[60]

“From there, actions branch out in the revealed world. This is the mystery of גדולים (*gedolim*), *Great, are the deeds of YHVH, discovered by all who desire them* (ibid., 111:2). *Gedolim* since they issue from גדול (*gadol*), Great. They are called רחמיך (*raḥamekha*), *Your Compassions, are Many, O YHVH* (Psalms 119:156); *Where are* חסדיך (*ḥasadekha*), *Your Kindnesses* (Psalms 89:50); and *Remember* רחמיך (*raḥamekha*), *Your Compassions, O YHVH, and* חסדיך (*ḥasadekha*), *Your Kindnesses* (Psalms 25:6). Even though we have established that these are above, they also branch down below like the array above, as is written: *For they are from the world* (ibid.)—*from the world*, above; *from the world*, below.[61]

“Thus, they are not called by their names like those above, who are called by names. They are like the array

above, but they are counted among those standing externally. They are supports for the Torah, having emerged from the upper chariots. These were from King David—and this is what he used to utter continually, all-encompassing, as we have established.[62]

“Come and see: All those exalted names of those ten that we mentioned that may not be erased—this is fitting. But their chariots—called epithets—why may they be erased? Well, this mystery is explained in the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava: all these exalted names exist as a body for the heavenly soul—unknown and unrevealed. These epithets, however, are body for the body just like the nut has a shell for the shell; or like blossoms that have a husk for a husk, with the kernel within. Here, too, these ten names are all like the pattern of shell and kernel. And even though they are all entirely kernel, heavenly luminaries, and exalted lamps—such that none can stand in their place—nonetheless they are all modeled after the husk of that which cannot be apprehended nor cognized at all; all the more so, regarding the mystery of *Ein Sof*. All these epithets are shells in relation to them. Everything is constituted of this within that—with the hidden kernel deep within, utterly imperceptible. Consequently we are not troubled with regard to the last shell, even if they are erased. Nonetheless, permission is not granted to erase even one little letter from the Torah.[63]

“If you say, ‘Well, then, it follows that the final *he* (as mentioned) must be the final shell in relation to these,’ [4c] it is not so! [Final *he*] is a shell in relation to those celestial ones, but with regard to the epithets She is not, since they do not perform conjugally with Her. Only those celestial names do so, and not the epithets. Indeed, when She ascends upward to be crowned above and to unite in the mystery of right and left, all those chariots—epithets—all encircle Her, surrounding Her like a husband with his wife,

spreading his wings over her. These are the very ones who spread the Husband's wings over Her, enveloping on every side, while She joins conjugally with Her Husband. The mnemonic for this: *I spread My wings over you* (Ezekiel 16:8) and *Spread your wings over your handmaid* (Ruth 3:9).[64]

"Consequently, they are inside and they are outside; and She is inside and She is outside. These epithets are inside and outside—whatever is inside exists outside; whatever is outside exists inside; and it is all fitting.[65]

"Happy is the lot of those who know how to travel on the straight path, straying neither to the right nor the left, as we have established: *For the ways of YHVH are right* (Hosea 14:10)![66]

"Spring of the well, never ceasing—this pillar, covenant sustaining all. All upper ones and all lower ones are found here on account of the yearning of love, since it is the desire above and below to illuminate the face and irrigate the garden.[67]

"Here there is no chariot poised within to be revealed, but rather it is all concealed in concealment. It does not stand revealed, but rather all supernal names and all the chariots draw near, hushed. When those names draw near, chariots spread over, covering all sides—this rung and the rung below. They are called 'wings of Her Husband,' enveloping all. This rung enters in a whisper, like a spring within a well, its waters never ceasing—nor does that spring ever withdraw. The totality is called Well, as is written: [*the well*] *that was dug out by princes* (Numbers 21:18) and *a well of living waters* (Genesis 26:19), as we have established.[68]

"This spring of the well is sealed from that well—the one in which it enters, murmuring—but this one digs into that point, mystery of final *he* (as we have stated), and penetrates Her, entering Her, completely imperceptible.[69]

“This is as we have established: when *alef* or *yod* bonds with *he*, this *he* bears a single point to benefit the world—examples are ה א (*alef he*) or ה י (*yod he*). Then spring of the well is in that point, entering into it, utterly unnoticed; similarly, that point is located within the mystery of the Holy of Holies.[70]

“Similarly, the mystery of Her invocation is in the mystery of the Holy of Holies, since expulsion of breath occurs within the throat—*ah* or *yah*. Since this is the place where the Holy of Holies abides: a great voice—but unknown (and it is not actual breath). Then it is Holy of Holies—actually—and it exists in consummation of all, shining from above and below. Then that *he* is joined with those supernal letters. And it is all a single name, shining from above and below.[71]

“When the spring bores into that point, penetrating it, then all those supernal names and all those exalted sides (which we have mentioned), all enter into it longingly, full-spirited. They enter Her above with devotion alone—entirely with spirit, not physically. Like a husband who has shed all his clothing when he is about to have intercourse with his wife, here, too, all those chariots (which we have mentioned), above and below, all encircle Her, enveloping Her, while Her Husband sheds all. Likewise, all the limbs come to join only with Her with spirit—actually—then the totality constitutes a singular longing.[72]

“Of this, when the blessed Holy One is ready before Her but Israel are not righteous—for they are the wick for illumination—what is written? *I had taken off my robe, was I to don it again? I had bathed my feet, was I to soil them again?* (Song of Songs 5:3). *I had taken off my robe*—these are the epithets (as we have mentioned), for when they are all joined, they constitute the robe of the blessed Holy One. When He is poised before Her, He has shed all in order to join with Her. Of this is written *I had taken off*—for adornment, [5b] and to be prepared to benefit You, but You

were not prepared fittingly. Now, *shall I don it again*? And He turned back, withdrawing from Her.[73]

"*I had bathed my feet—shall I soil them again?* Behold, I had rinsed my feet of that filth; and what was that filth? When I adorned and prepared myself for You, I had purged that vile Other Side from My feet. Now *shall I* replace that filth and shroud the Temple, since You were not ready with Your adornments, prepared before Me?[74]

"From here we learn that when the spirit of impurity passes from the world, everything—above and below—is magnified. And when Assembly of Israel stands ready before the blessed Holy One, then slime does not rule in the world and everything grows, above and below. Of this is written *I had bathed my feet—was I to soil them*, as before? [75]

"Consequently, all those epithets were stripped off when the spring bore into that point and was concealed within it. Once the spring is hidden within Her, then everything is illuminated; and the well is filled by that spring that had penetrated Her—sealed within Her with a whisper. Those epithets covered Her, spreading out on this side and that.[76]

"These are fine membranes of the nut that cling enduringly, encasing the kernel within. But the hard shell is pulverized, not surviving there. Then everything is in the supernal mystery, allowing entry into these mysteries. Happy are those who gaze aspiringly upon the words of supernal mysteries to follow the path of truth, to acquire merit in this world, that will shine upon them in the world that is coming! Of them is written *The enlightened will shine like the radiance of the sky, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever* (Daniel 12:3). Happy are they in this world and in the world that is coming![77]

“Image of the letters in the sacred mystery of lower *he* (as we have discussed). Mystery of the Temple—when Moon is sovereign, adorned for Sun to receive illumination from Him, they stand ready as two lovers, facing each other. Maidens standing by Her are adorned and arrayed with embellishments—one behind Her, one in front of Her, one on this side, and one on that side—while She stands in the middle. Seventy-two Sanhedrin [members] are arranged like a semicircular threshing-floor, fashioning a body for Moon, adorning the Matron for Her Husband.[78]

“She appears like this , like a crescent moon, with a point in the center, that point absorbing light from Sun to illuminate the entire body.[79]

“This is the mystery of the point that inheres in part of the eye—everything exists in the point located in the center, for it absorbs all the light to illuminate the whole eye. Similarly, Moon is illuminated only from one point that abides and is concealed in the center, even though it cannot be seen in Moon.[80]

“Come and see: Every circle in the world is formed from the midst of the single point standing in its center. Consequently, the circle of Moon is from a single point concealed within Her in the center, fashioning all. The point located in the center absorbs all light, shining upon Her body, illuminating all.[81]

“Mystery of mysteries for those who contemplate mysteries of wisdom: this *he*, which is half the body of Moon (which is circular) and (as we have mentioned) is within the point standing in the middle—why is She only a half? She is not a half, but rather sealed on one side and open on the other, like a female who is open toward a male to receive him within her and to be illuminated by him and joined with him. To this end, she is open toward him to receive him. Then She is called *he*. What is the meaning of הא (*he alef*)? Like one who says, ‘הא (*he*), Here, I am.’[82]

“When She is illuminated by Him and they are conjoined to each other, then Moon is full, *he* is consummated, and Moon is filled from all. From the status of that *he*, the crescent-Moon, מם (*mem*) is formed—Moon in its fullness. [5c] She stands in the aspect of Supernal Mother—who is ם (final *mem*), sealed, as we have established regarding the mystery of לִמרבה המשרה (*le-marbeh ha-misrah*), *For the abundance of dominion* (Isaiah 9:6). Now Moon exists in fullness—lower world patterned after upper world. This is the mystery of the letter ם (final *mem*).[83]

“Come and see. This letter, final *mem*, appears as a circle only once the Moon exists in Her fullness—everything deriving from the mystery of *he* (as has been said). Thus, She is open at first in the mystery of *he* facing Her Husband, and after being consummated by Him, She is filled to perfection; She is fashioned as final *mem*, in the manner above of World that is Coming (as we have said). Consequently, upper *he* and lower *he*, final *mem* above and final *mem* below—all modeled after each other. This is one mystery: upper and lower as one.[84]

“Come and see: at first, Upper World is open in the mystery of *he*. Once She is filled from the supernal paths, illuminated to shine forth, She spreads out and is perfected, becoming final *mem*—all in one mystery.[85]

“Image of the letter ו (*vav*) in the sacred mystery: this letter—upper world—extends an extension, shining below. That extension exists on six sides, integrated as one in a single bond—this one like that one, and that one like this one—all joined to their chariots in this letter.[86]

“This letter: inscribed with six sides integrated as one, shining upon Moon with the mystery of six integrated sides. For when they are joined as one, extending in that extension, everything is in the image of *vav*, in the image of Adam. But even though they are six sides, they cannot be seen spread out—but rather as one body.[87]

“Mystery of mysteries for those who contemplate images of the letters according to the straight path: Here in this letter all are joined in a single bond, showing that they all inhere in upholding the body, for it gathers all. When this *vav* stands erect in a single compact, He is ready before the Female, naked, having shed all; mystery of the image of the body is the image of Adam.[88]

“In contemplation, the mysteries of the arms are on this side and that, joined to the body; but they are not seen independent of the body, since they are all integrated within it. When can they be seen? When this letter spreads out and is called א (*alef*), then there are two arms—one on this side, one on that—with the body standing between them in the middle.[89]

“This is why *alef* is the head of all the letters—because when this embellishment is established, it is the head of all that issues from World that is Coming. And even though other supernal mysteries are uttered through the mystery of *alef*, this is the clearest manifestation of its mystery, as is found in the Book of Adam. This is the clarification of the mystery. From here emanate other letters, all on their sides—each and every one, fittingly.[90]

“This letter is entirely one—*vav* and *alef*—except that the former conceals all within it, and the latter displays the entire image. If you say, ‘But two legs are not seen!’ This is certainly so, for the three sides are the mystery of three others. Further, these constitute the mystery of Written Torah, encompassing all; and from here everything else emerges—such as Prophets and Writings—all as one. *Alef* is one, mystery of three facets—the patriarchs. When the patriarchs are united as one, they are one. This is why *alef* is called one, head of all letters, mystery of Written Torah, as has been said. Thus, *alef* and *vav* are a single mystery: *vav* as the form of Adam, head and body as a single extension, while *alef* is the complete image for display.[91]

“Now, if you say that *vav* is a single emanation, a single extension without other images, why is its secret six? And *alef*, which bears three images, why is its mystery [6b] one? Actually, from here we learn that it is forbidden to heap up specifications regarding the Holy Name; rather, one should join them together, uniting them as one, so that they become one. Once they are as one in a single *kelal*, general rule—in a single image—then one can distinguish them, establishing the specifications that emerge from that *kelal* as it appeared. Of this, *kelal* transforms, becoming *perat*, specification; and *perat* transforms, becoming *kelal*. This *kelal, vav*, transformed into *perat*, in the mystery of six—a single, solitary extension. The *perat*, א (*alef*)—three images bonded as one, transformed into a *kelal* in the mystery of one. This is the mystery of *kelal, perat*, and *kelal—alef, vav, alef*—and all is one.[92]

“*Alef* is *perat* that transforms into *kelal* and afterward transforms into *perat—perat, kelal*, and *perat*. *Vav* is *kelal* that transforms into *perat* and then transforms into *kelal*—this is *kelal, perat*, and *kelal*. *Alef* is *perat* that transforms into *kelal* (as we have established), and then afterward transforms into *perat*, since it is אלף (*elef*), one thousand. This pertains to the mystery of *alef*—arms and body, mysteries splitting off into one hundred, and from one hundred into a thousand. This is why it is called אלף (*alef*), in the mystery of אלף (*elef*), one thousand. *Alef*—one—*kelal*. *Elef*—one thousand—*perat*.[93]

“*Vav* is *kelal* that transforms into *perat* (as we have established), and afterward transforms into *kelal*—mystery of *Adam* as one, one mystery, everything ascending in a single mystery and in a single balance, all becoming one. *Vav* transforms, becoming one totality, one luminary, comprising six sides.[94]

“Mystery of *God saw the light, that it was good* (Genesis 1:4)—this is *vav*, flowing and illuminating in the mystery of the right, in a single totality. Afterward, *God separated the light from the darkness* (ibid.). This letter transformed into

alef, two arms—one on this side and one on that; one called *light*, one called *darkness*. This letter cleaves them apart, engendering dispute between the two sides—*light* and *darkness*, as is written: *God separated the light from the darkness*. What is the meaning of *separated*? The dispute was mediated and the two sides were harmonized, becoming complete. Separation is the mediation of conflict toward resolution, all becoming one, consummate as one—thus, *alef* and *vav* are as one.[95]

"*God called the light Day* (Genesis 1:5)—one side of the mystery of *alef*. Afterward the two sides separated to fashion the work—one making evening, one making morning. Once the deeds were accomplished, the two were harmonized and integrated in *vav*. This is as is written: *There was evening, there was morning: one day* (ibid.). *There was evening*—from the side of Darkness. *There was morning*—from the side of Light. Once these deeds were completed, they were combined immediately into one, as is written: *one day*. Mystery of *vav*—they were integrated within it to become one.[96]

"This explains the mystery of why it is written ויהי (*va-yhi*), *and there was*, and not והיה (*ve-hayah*), *and there will be*. ויהי (*Va-yhi*), *And there was*—once they appear in the mystery of *alef* and perform their deeds, they are sealed away, unseen; then it is written ויהי (*va-yhi*), *and there was*. That is how it was, but no longer—since now it is integrated in the mystery of *vav*; now it is all *one day*. *Who can utter the mighty acts of YHVH or declare all His praise?* (Psalms 106:2).[97]

"*God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered into* [*one place*]*...'* (Genesis 1:9)—lower side, one side in the mystery of *alef*, side that is called *Darkness*. This is the meaning of *under the heavens*, for it is from that side that the waters separate, gushing in a secret flow from another side above—the right side.[98]

“Light that has been hidden away—where has it been hidden? In the mystery of *vav*. When it is treasured away, everything is treasured away—the other side hidden away with it. Of this is written *under the heavens… into one place*. This side remained solitary, with no companion, when it was first secreted away. From that side, when the waters split [6c] and entered into it, Dry Land appeared from that side. This is the mystery of *Mount Zion, summit of the north, city of the great King* (Psalms 48:3), for it appears and is revealed from that side. After these two sides have been hidden away, everything is restored, becoming *vav*—all concealed within it, becoming one.[99]

“*God said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven’* (Genesis 1:14). *Firmament of heaven—vav*, the letter called *heaven*. *Firmament of heaven*—a single ray extending from it to shine upon Earth and to saturate Dry Land. This is *the firmament of heaven*.[100]

“Who is *firmament of heaven*? That ray that extended from the letter ו (*vav*), like this: ג (*gimmel*). Ray that emanated from *vav* and transformed into *gimmel*—mystery of three, for this one sustains three who stand below. All those supernal lights stand upon this *firmament*, a ray extended from *vav* to shine upon and saturate Earth, as mentioned.[101]

“Letter *vav*—this form, divested of all, for nothing can be seen of it at all from among all those other sides, except for one solitary extension of the body, without arms or supports. This pillar abides in this way—in the mystery of the Holy Name—to be ready for Female below.[102]

“Even though these other sides are inscribed within it, this is a secret of secrets for those who know the mysteries of faith—knowing when it is *alef* and when it is *vav*. When mysteries of faith are ready to be viewed and to teach about the unification in the mystery of the holy name to the entire world, then it exists in the mystery of *alef*, showing that this is the beginning of everything and teaching about the faith and unity of the blessed Holy One. Thus it stands at the

head of all letters, for a person comes into this world only to learn and to acknowledge his Master. It stands in this form before the eyes of all—teaching about the wisdom of faith of one's Master *from the end of the heavens to the other end of the heavens* (Deuteronomy 4:32).[103]

"Thus it is inscribed—before the human—with images that are fitting to inquire and know. This is as is written: *For ask now…* (ibid.). This is the first question to instruct an individual about his Master, for this is the beginning of all. Consequently, this is the mystery of *alef*, standing at the head of all letters.[104]

"When He stands poised, prepared before the Female, in the mystery of the Holy Name, He stands divested of all, joined completely to the Female, appearing solely with His body. Everything joined to the woman with its arms: one beneath Her head, and one embracing Her. This is why no legs appear on the letter *vav*. That which proceeds from the firmament is completely concealed within Her in concealment, in the mystery of mysteries. *Vav* appears alone, like one naked of all; then he is poised and joined to the Female. Then *vav* and the mystery of the Holy Name are ready to be seen, for the final *he* exists only in fullness, fittingly replete.[105]

"Happy is the lot of one who enters and exits, who knows the ways and paths of the mystery of faith, to know his Master! Happy is he in this world, and happy in the world that is coming![106]

"Image of the letter י (*yod*)—primordial point that ascends in Thought, concealed and unknown. This point abides in the hiddenness of Thought, since it has no extension at all. Unknown: where is its path and where does it lead? Who is it and from where does it emerge? Of this, all exist within it.[107]

"That point is in Will of Thought—utterly unknown. It is the point that abides in supernal letter ה (*he*), who presides

over all those six pillars (which we have mentioned) and those five (which we have mentioned)—they are פליאות (*peli'ot*), marvels. Hence this mystery is called פלא (*pele*), marvel, and אות (*ot*), letter, with א (*alef*) straddling this way and that—entirely אות פלאות (*ot pela'ot*), a letter of marvels, as we have established.[108]

"As for all those pillars and chariots that we have mentioned, when final *he* ascends to join *vav, vav*'s chariots spread over the Female (as we have said). When final *he* ascends for bonding, those that are not encompassed within the supernal chariots all envelop and encircle the Female. This is the mystery: When the Female is not joined to the Male, [7b] a harsh shell shrouds Her, eclipsing Her light. But when She is joined to the Male, all those upper and lower chariots cover Her—holy shell—and She is garbed in them. Then She is bonded with supernal *vav* and to *he*, which has Supernal Point concealed within. When She absorbs them and they are all within Her, they all become *he*, like this: . Supernal Point, abiding in the center, is concealed. It is like a ו (*vav*) that travels in a circle, fashioning a figure to hide this Point.[109]

"Alternatively, a figure is formed with Her chariots, and She stands as the Point in the center—then She is called *he*. This letter is also the mystery of *vav*—they constitute its form and abide in this mystery with the point in the center. Thus, all is one. This upper point is called Supernal Wisdom, while lower point is called Lower Wisdom, Small Wisdom; this one is *he* and that one is *he*, although that point is inscribed beforehand on its own.[110]

"*Yod*—single, supernal Point presiding over nine pillars (as we have established). They are not called by their names, but rather by *he* and *vav* and through their chariots. But these nine pillars of *yod* issue from the midst of the Lamp and are inscribed beneath *yod*, in the nine points that spread out among the letters, since all the letters issue

from *yod* and its paths. Just as the letters emerge from *yod*, these nine points issue from those nine.[111]

"Even though we have said that these nine are beneath *yod*, they are actually upon *yod*. Nevertheless, they are supports for it and are called chariots for nine others for they are the mystery of *Ein Sof*, all pillars for *yod*. All those below are concealed and will return to that point. Of this, all the days…"[112]

קו המדה

Qav ha-Middah

LINE OF MEASURE

Rabbi Shim’on said,[1] “Until now the companions did not know the mystery of unification.”[2]

Rabbi El’azar said, “All verses of the Torah are concealed, supernal mysteries. This verse—what is its secret?”

He opened, saying, “*Hear, O Israel, YHVH, our God, YHVH is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4). Even though many aspects of this verse have been expounded, the mystery of unification within it is sealed off from sight, the heart stopped-up before it. For many hard-hearted sages have pored over it but neither grasp nor comprehend—hidden from their sight and understanding of their hearts.[3]

“Come and contemplate the mystery of unification: hidden letters, rows, and words—engraved in their stations. *Hear*—the term *Hear* of the mystery of unity is in supreme, hidden concealment, and revealed in secret engravings, ascending in its rungs, to be completed above.[4]

“שמע (*Shema*), *Hear*—שם (*shem*), *Name*, suspended from it, hearing suspended from it. Name, as is said: *which is called the Name* (2 Samuel 6:2).[5]

“ע (*Ayin*), *Eye*—watchfulness—from the beginning of the year until the end of the year. ע טובה (*Ayin tovah*), A benevolent eye, for gazing, since there is a benevolent eye and a malevolent eye—benevolent eye from the right side, malevolent eye from the left side. Benevolent eye—this is the mystery inscribed upon Israel, as is written: *Israel*,

Israel the Elder (and it has been established that this signifies Israel the Elder).[6]

"As for the opinion that it signifies Israel the Small, it is all one. Israel the Small is a fine reading—since the eye rests upon it, too. To whom does this refer? It is written: *He does not withdraw His eye from the righteous* (Job 36:7)—Diminutive ו (*vav*) and Supreme ו (*vav*)—all one. Diminutive *vav*—spring of the well that never ceases.[7]

"Until now, engraved paths of this mystery have been explained. From here onward: mystery of mysteries of the perfect unity, as is fitting—measure that has no measure, calibrating and measuring on all sides.[8]

"יהוה אלהינו יהוה (*YHVH Eloheinu YHVH*), *YHVH our God, YHVH* (Deuteronomy 6:4)—mystery of fourteen letters, three inner names, principle of all. Single mystery—above, middle, and below. Here is the principle of all sides: from the place that has no measure, called אין סוף (*Ein Sof*), until the limit of the final side, lowest of all rungs. One above, site of the beginning from which paths emerge toward all sides. One in the middle—mystery of Moses, integrating himself in it, in the midst of Abraham and Isaac. One—principle of King David—single adornment and pedestal for them all.[9]

"When the letters of faith unite, they are revealed in the interlinking and nexus of all—two worlds, above and below. Upper one soaring—immeasurably, infinitely. Lower one [57a] descends from its calibration to the limitlessness of all rungs. Upper World, linked and ascending infinitely, distributes its letters among its rungs—seven letters—אלה יהוה (*YHVH Elh*). This concludes the mystery of Upper World—linked—ascending infinitely, apportioned among seven letters.[10]

"Lower World that is bonded to it descends to the limit of all rungs, dividing its letters among its rungs—seven letters—ינו יהוה (*YNV YHVH*). Three upper letters with these four—single mystery, single bond, and node—with no

division among them. Consequently, fourteen letters—seven and seven; and it is all one.[11]

"דאח (*Eḥad*), *One* (ibid.)—they have established that the ד (*dalet*) is supreme, larger than all the other letters. Similarly with the ר (*resh*) of דאל אח (*el aḥer*), *another god* (Exodus 34:14), to teach that one must not exchange holy, supernal mystery [for another], nor integrate *Sitra Aḥra* with it.[12]

"The mnemonic—large ע ד (*ayin, dalet*)—עד (*ed*), witness, to mystery of mysteries, evoking a flow of the efflux of the Mystery of Faith.[13]

"Whoever knows this mystery knows the mystery of his Master and inherits two worlds, this world and the world that is coming. This emanation is called *Qav ha-Middah*, and it is bestowed upon exalted, holy sages who know the mystery of their Master, exerting themselves on behalf of His glory. But it is not transmitted to sinners of the world—ignorant and indifferent to the glory of their Master. True righteous ones who bear the supernal mystery of faith—it is transmitted to them to know and to gaze upon, since they do not stray to the right or the left.[14]

"*Qav ha-Middah*: Length and Breadth. *Qav ha-Middah*: Depth and Height. *Qav ha-Middah*: Circle and Square.[15]

"Established to be known through thirteen gates—twenty-six on the two sides. When they are engraved in their engravings, they are all one within this measure. *Qav ha-Middah* ascends and descends, engraved in its engravings on all sides.[16]

"Light Not Existing in Light engraves, and the Spark of All Sparks bursts forth, striking within the Will of Wills, secreted within it, unknown.[17]

"When this Will desires to ramify, this Spark—concealed within Will, befitting and not befitting to exist as color—shoots out. When this Will ramifies, this Spark—splaying color and no color—strikes, entering into that extension,

splaying forth in its colors. It ascends, becoming actualized through its ascent within Will and its emanation.[18]

"Will strikes its extension in concealment, unknown—emitting gossamer lights, coalescing as one. When they seek to emerge, that Spark, imbued with colors, strikes the extension and it becomes constricted. On account of the pressure, those diaphanous lights emerge, audible as one. Then the Spark displays colors within them, all dyed at once: white, red, green, and black. The Spark lingered there for twelve months, and then they were uprooted, and planted in another place.[19]

"This Spark ascends and descends, and is called בוצינא דקרדינותא (*Botsina de-Qardinuta*), Lamp of Adamantine Darkness. Enhancing and striking all the luminous shoots, it decrees, 'Grow!' Then springs gush forth from that supernal, primordial extension, irrigating and illuminating them all, and they flourish.[20]

"With the בוציצא דקרדינותא (*Botsitsa de-Qardinuta*), Spark of Adamantine Darkness, the One who Shines, shines—ascending and descending, spreading out in all directions. Then it is called *Qav ha-Middah*, its measurement enduring above and below.[21]

Qav ha-Middah—*Botsitsa de-Qardinuta*, Spark of Adamantine Darkness, Concealed of all Concealed, lustrous measure, configuring beauty for all. The beauty itself, emerging from the first extension, configures them. They stand within it, poised for calibration above and below.[22]

One who attains this mystery and knows it, merits to know the wisdom of his Master. Happy is his portion in this world and in the world that is coming![23] "This is the measurement of the Mystery of Faith. *Qav ha-Middah*—proportion of Length and Breadth; [57b] proportion of Depth and Height; proportion of Circle and Square—all encircling a single calibration. All radiances and mysteries ascend, descend, or spread out only with this measure—

excluding above, above, where there is no limit, and no possibility of viewing or contemplation. All proportions and all measures—it encompasses them and they are all contained within it.[24]

"*Qav ha-Middah*—colors imbued and existing within it spread out. When they flourish, they ascend, spreading out in Length and Breadth, Depth and Height. [*Qav ha-Middah*] ascends, calibrating all with a single measure, beginning from above, from the place where measurement begins, until the end of the rungs of faith.[25]

"First Gate—beginning of the beginning of Concealed of the Concealed. This Spark, amplified and sparkling—unrevealed and unknown until it reaches Will of Wills. From there it is revealed and not revealed until it clusters clusters for measurement. As it surveys, they become magnified, scaling every side—node thrust from there, initiating links.[26]

"First cluster—three thousand worlds within it. One world ascending upward, one descending toward it, and one below, more diminutive than all. Between each world are one thousand worlds. Lowest world of all—one thousand cubits and five spans encompassed within this cluster. The length of this cluster is three thousand worlds and five fingerbreadths. Its breadth is three thousand cubits. All of these are interlinked in a single circle—circle that ascends and descends in a different circle. Six thousand worlds within a single circle, and this cluster contains them all.[27]

"First cluster—existence fixed here, clusters and measures radiating from here. From this cluster, *Qav ha-Middah* begins to ramify measurements. Gauging one thousand, corresponding to a single signet, and a thousand, corresponding to a single signet, each one bonding with the other. These signets comprise two hundred thousand worlds, and the blessed Holy One yearns for them. These

signets are unified—this with that. Between each signet are five hundred thousand worlds, their gates open on every side—a handbreadth between each world. Second signet is greater than the other—in the emanation of the cluster it precedes all.[28]

"From here emanation proceeds downward and the *Qav ha-Middah* gauges three spans—smooth, clusterless. The length of each span equals sixty myriad worlds; and the heavens were configured with that span, in the mystery of sixty myriad worlds. And each and every world contains four thousand other worlds. This is as is written: *gauged the heavens with a span* (Isaiah 40:12).[29]

"*Qav ha-Middah* ramified, and the configuration of its measurement was 2½ spans, and half a half-span, clusterless.[30]

"All measurements of this side exist within the *Qav ha-Middah* and comprise a single measure for the entire Square, but this is not the case for the Circle. The extension that abides within *Qav ha-Middah* is called Measure of the Square—in this measurement, everything abides enduringly. Depth of this square—fifty spans, opening onto five sides, with a height of five. At this point, stands the measure of the Square. At this point, the cluster exists enduringly.[31]

"First cluster is the beginning of this [structure], and is established. *Qav ha-Middah* is fulfilled in the calibration of the emanation. At this point, the first gate is actualized.[32]

"In sum, on each of the sides of *Qav ha-Middah*'s emanation of the Square are seven thousand worlds, seven handbreadths, five and a half, and a half-of-a-half spans. Depth and Height: fifty-five spans.[33]

"Thus, *Qav ha-Middah* is perfected in a single emanation, from beginning of the first cluster until the end of this emanation of the Square. At this point: one calibration for one existent; [57c] and it is called supernal measure, concealed existent, first cluster. This Square is the fulfillment of the mystery of *YHVH*, holy, supernal name;

principle of the first node; and extension of the Square that rises up within the extension, with concealed Will, endlessly. Until here, a single, supernal concealed existent.[34]

"From here, *Qav ha-Middah* ramifies—calibrating in the midst of colors that abide in a single cluster, a single coalescence. *Qav ha-Middah* is revealed and actualized within the shining Spark, all colors abiding within it.[35]

"Second Gate. *Qav ha-Middah* dwells and is revealed in twelve supernal clusters and 236 other miniscule clusters. These twelve supernal clusters exist within the first hidden cluster and the Square—bonded and united with them, and also united and bonded with these others. When one contemplates these matters, all is a single emanation.[36]

"First cluster consists of these twelve that stand within that emanation—since they are more manifest, while all those others are not. Nonetheless, they cleave to each other and envelop each other. Within *Qav ha-Middah* they all exist as one, a single coalescence for a single emanation.[37]

"This cluster—like the paradigm of the first cluster. Its measure in Length and Breadth is precisely like that array, except this one is revealed while the first is infixed, not revealed.[38]

"Third cluster. This cluster is first, different from all those colors, being more deeply hued, and poised for ramification and expansion. *Qav ha-Middah* commences, gauging those twelve clusters. Three of them are supreme, prepared for emanation in that measure that measures. Length of days is increased: the mnemonic is חול (*ḥol*), phoenix—mystery of *my days will abound like the phoenix* (Job 29:18), as has been established. Measuring one thousand, beginning from the top of the signet above—image of the mystery of Adam.[39]

"Measuring from the head for extension downward in length, commencing measurement of the head above, surveying in a circle on two sides. One side is 300 and ½ and ⅓ spans. This side stands upon five forks that enter the

second side, these cleaving to those. The measurement of these forks that penetrate each other is 300 handbreadths, and 1½ spans. These and those cleave to each other, to attach this side to the second side. The *Botsitsa* measures the second side through emanation, and an extension is fashioned of 300 and ½ and ⅓ spans on that first side. In sum, the circle of the head is 601⅔ spans. The measurement of the forks is six hundred handbreadths and three spans.[40]

"This is the circle of the head, emanated by the *Botsitsa*, measuring its Length downward. In sum, on account of the surveying by the *Botsitsa*, there are six hundred thousand worlds and sixty myriad others within it. This is the emanation of the *Botsitsa*, enacting measurements for the Circle and Length. This is the cluster below and cluster above.[41]

"*Qav ha-Middah* measures out one thousand, beginning from the Depth of the body inward. Then the *Botsitsa* emanates, surveying the Length in the Depth, cinching five hundred thousand worlds inward, within its innards. This is as is written: *His loins, the ivory of thrones, enveloped with sapphires* (Song of Songs 5:14). *Enveloped—Botsitsa* before emanating; *enveloped* for the purpose of emanation and gauging.[42]

"This is the measurement of the *Botsitsa* on this side, Height and Breadth. In the mystery that emerges from the *Botsitsa*, a single emanant comprising Height and Breadth is three hundred thousand spans for emanation in three hundred worlds. Between each world are three hundred thousand handbreadths, all abiding in Height and Breadth, in the mystery of the *Botsitsa de-Qardinuta*. [57d] The latter presides over these six sides—six sides of the universe—which all exist in this *Botsitsa*, in this emanation.[43]

"Now interlinked: one node below, one node in the middle, and one node above. These three nodes are cinched in this location in the *Botsitsa*; and the *Botsitsa* is located in the

mystery of Above, Middle, and Below, enacting emanations. These three nodes are cinched in the *Botsitsa* and are established in the dimension of Length, fashioning three others on the other side. These three—the first ones—exist within the extension; and each and every cluster exists within an extension of six hundred thousand worlds, six spans, and six handbreadths—all abiding enduringly. Thus, there are three primary clusters comprising eighteen thousand cubits, eighteen thousand spans, and eighteen thousand handbreadths. This is the mystery of the *Botsitsa* on this side. Similarly, three other clusters are established in this same array.[44]

"Everything exists by the will of the emanation of the *Botsitsa* that ascends endlessly. The emanation of the *Botsitsa* expands from these clusters, ascending and cinching all in a single cluster within the emanation, in a single perfection.[45]

"The emanation resumes—standing within Depth, Circle, and Square—ascending and cinching a single cluster above. Afterward, it descends, cinching a single cluster below; and then everything endures.[46]

"Mystery of the *Botsitsa* is present in all these clusters and in all these measurements—a single measure and a single cluster. When that cluster ascends, cinching a single node, it enacts a measurement, is established enduringly, and rivets the fixity of faith. When that node descends, cinching a single node, it ramifies an emanation, is established enduringly, and rivets the fixity of faith.[47]

"Square stands upon Circle; Circle upon Length; Length upon Depth; and Depth upon Height—all in the mystery of *Botsitsa* enacting measurements.[48]

"*Botsitsa* stands poised, resuming emanation as before. Upon cinching the existent once, it is enveloped. When enveloped, all colors are inscribed in fitting places: white, red, green, and black. These four colors are enhanced by *Botsitsa*, illuminated by a glow that is riveted and radiating.

This is the mystery of *enveloped with sapphires* (Song of Songs 5:14)—glowing sapphires.[49]

"*Botsitsa* resumes, emanating as before, raising the Line, and meting out a measurement. It gauges one thousand on this side, one thousand on that side—for four sides, corresponding to the permanence of the four letters *YHVH*. *Botsitsa* emanated, gauging within colors for enduring existence in the sparkling—for Length, Height, Depth, and Breadth.[50]

"Spark of the right, colored white in the mystery of the *Botsitsa* in its measure, like the emanation of colors that endure in the measurement of Length above and below: seven hundred thousand worlds and six hundred and thirteen spans. This is replicated in all those dimensions, in all those colors. When the measurement of the color black is poised—on account of its deficiency—to join with color white, and then these two colors join, they constitute a single measure. In sum, these colors are found in the measurement of the extension to the four dimensions of colors: twenty-eight thousand worlds with one thousand two hundred on this side and that side, plus twelve spans.[51]

"This concludes the emanation of the mystery of *Botsitsa* above in its measurement in all dimensions—Length, Breadth, Depth, and Height. Within these four, all measurements exist in the mystery of the *Botsitsa*—configured for perpetual existence, existing within the will and emanation of heart and spirit.[52]

"Whoever wishes to mete out a measurement with this measurement (*shi'ura*), taking the *Botsitsa de-Qardinuta* in his hand to cause a flow of emanation with it to all these dimensions and to effect this emanation—happy is his portion! No mystery [58a] will be withheld from him, nor will any matter of wisdom escape him.[53]

"At this stage, *Botsitsa* resides in the mystery of supernal Wisdom.[54]

“Supernal clusters abiding in the *Botsitsa de-Qardinuta* number seventeen. Inhering in those seventeen clusters are mystery of measurement, procession of undulations, and the emanation of *Botsitsa* between one cluster and another, in one side and another. All seventeen clusters exist in the measurements of Length and Breadth, Depth and Height. Between this cluster and that abide all mysteries within all the measurements. These clusters number thirteen; all those others exist in a single assemblage—all in a single mystery—corresponding to those four that we have mentioned: the four colors, and the mystery of four letters.[55]

“From here on, *Botsitsa* emanates, while other clusters are actualized within *Botsitsa* to mete out other measurements in the mystery of three names. Of these, two names remain for *Botsitsa* for emanation. Those three names (as we have mentioned) are יהוה אלהינו יהוה (*YHVH Eloheinu YHVH*), *YHVH our God, YHVH*. Two names remain for *Botsitsa*: *YHVH Eloheinu*.[56]

“At this stage there is an emanation in *Botsitsa* that is not depth of depth—mystery standing in the middle; at this stage *Botsitsa* is enveloped. It emanates in three dimensions of mystery, meting out measures. *Botsitsa* exists and is configured here—a different measure, external to those measurements.[57]

“The consummation of *Botsitsa*, enhanced before emanating. Configured from within the hiddenness of *Ein Sof* —ascending and descending, treasuring within what gets treasured away. Emanating three purples for it that cannot be seen—these constitute the enhancement for emanation and surveying.[58]

“It was adorned in concealment, concealed in a different hue, rendering beauty and perfection of *Adam*, for completion within the emanation, in beauty, and in enhancement for veiling what is hidden within.[59]

“*Botsitsa* begins to emanate, fashioning a single node above. That node rises up within that emanation, since it is enveloped. Upon commencing emanation, it cinches a single node, encompassing one thousand cubits. *Botsitsa* emanates one and one-half spans, measuring a measure for Length of one thousand six hundred worlds.[60]

“Length has a cluster from here and a cluster from there. Length procures from within the hiddenness of *Ein Sof*, until it reaches a single tower that flies through the air. At that juncture, *Botsitsa* had emanated, and stood in order to set the measure for this cluster. Then *Botsitsa* was rendered imperceptible, until this measure was measured, for it had been treasured away within that treasure-house. Afterward, [*Qav ha-Middah*] hurled it out. When it emerged, one thousand worlds and four myriad worlds and many other mysteries appeared there, all existing in that measure.[61]

“Then [*Qav ha-Middah*] emanated from that site, measuring five clusters in Square. Each and every cluster contains five hundred thousand worlds—each and every cluster enduring in the mystery of that treasure-house.[62]

“Beginning from the first cluster, *Botsitsa* emanated until the second cluster within Square: [a measure of] one thousand cubits. From this cluster, *Botsitsa* emanated toward the third node: another thousand cubits. From that cluster until the fourth cluster (Depth): one thousand cubits. From that cluster toward Depth below: one thousand cubits. In sum, these clusters within the measurements yield eight thousand worlds.[63]

“Here, with this measurement, a throne has been constructed for the first measurement (as we have stated). Here, the first measure is actualized and sits, fashioned by *Botsitsa* for eternal dwelling. This is the middle measure—within—[58b] secreted like the first.[64]

“Within this measure—mystery of *Adam*, as we have mentioned—*Botsitsa* appears, measuring within this emanation, gauging a measure of a node that endures and

is never removed. This node exists below; and a measurement is enacted within that node for the measure that abides in its beauty. Enhancing and calibrating measurements from within the will that had been treasured away, [the *Botsitsa*] draws that measurement downward.[65]

"Concerning this, Moses inherited a legacy, for he encompassed himself within the mystery of efflux that had ramified downward. Concerning this, he encompassed himself within this measure that stands in the middle channel. This measure abides enduringly until the Holy Covenant (as we have said). Appearing there are measurements in the mystery of *Botsitsa* like the measure above.[66]

"From here on, they emanated in the Mystery of Faith, becoming actualized and becoming the basis for all—all those chariots, upper and lower.[67]

"Until this point: mystery of *Botsitsa—Qav ha-Middah*—within mystery of the upper world, establishing a foundation among all those supernal pillars and mysteries. Happy is the lot of the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming, for they are able to cleave to the mystery of their Lord fittingly![68]

"From here on, *Botsitsa* begins to emanate within the Mystery of Faith. That first measured emanation is treasured away and ascends, glows, and sparkles—all from the midst of the mystery of *Botsitsa*. A single ether issues forth from the midst of *Botsitsa* into that measure, ascending and fashioning another emanation, different from the first. It is that very emanation that shot out from the midst of that ether in the mystery of *Botsitsa*, enduring and not enduring. A single emanation shoots out from *Botsitsa*—emerging and conveying the emanation to be crowned below—since here below stands a measure to be crowned and stabilized.[69]

"*Botsitsa* issues forth, emanating in the mystery of that ether that had emerged, measuring within 365 colors the

dross of gold, silver, bronze, and iron. It ramified, too, from the midst of a single cluster—poised to join upper and lower realms. That cluster radiates all colors in the mystery of the measure of the scepter.[70]

"From that cluster and below, measures disperse to diverse sides; and that emanation that shot out from the midst of the cluster joins them together as one. This cluster is cinched above to that emanation of the supernal measure that is concealed and treasured away, abiding in the foundation of *Botsitsa* that shines and endures. Everything is bonded below like that luminary that does not shine—poised to shine in the Mystery of Faith, to link this one with that one.[71]

"This cluster stands between upper and lower realms. Seven thousand worlds stand in the light of the measure of that cluster, gleaming in those colors below like the array above. These colors glisten from the midst of that cluster, and they all stand in the calibration of the measure in the emanation that radiated. They all abide enduringly, perfectly, to be crowned. When this emanation ramifies—surveying—everything is configured to link this with that.[72]

"An emanation emanates, issuing from the midst of *Botsitsa*—meting out emanations on the Right and Left, Depth and Height, Length and Breadth.[73]

"First measure to the right in that emanation—the emanation issues from the midst of the one previously mentioned, and is called Lesser *Botsitsa*. It stands ready for measuring diverse limbs, to join them as one and to cinch them in a single cluster, in that supernal measure—so that all becomes one in the mystery of a single measure.[74]

"Emanation ramifying to the right, measuring. Beginning within a Circle, it measures one thousand within that emanation. That emanation measures within a Circle, fashioning a cluster. From the upper cluster to this [58c] emanation are two thousand cubits [on the right side], two

thousand cubits on the left side—two thousand cubits on every side.[75]

"[*Qav ha-Middah*] begins the Circle by measuring and fashioning a node (as we have mentioned), with a boundary of two thousand cubits in the emanation. Emanating from the midst of the point standing amid the remaining forces, the measure is two thousand miles toward each side.[76]

"Beginning with that circle: one thousand nine hundred and one-half spans.[77]

"Beginning with that emanation, it measures in a Circle, fashioning two nodes from start to finish of the calibration—for this place does not endure within Square.[78]

"*YHVH*—measure of the emanation shooting out from the supernal node through the mystery of *Botsitsa*. Beginning at the Circle, extending and inclining downward until the side of the node below. It resumed measuring from this side to that side within the Depth of that Circle, not cinching a cluster. Measuring the downward flow, its gauging from the beginning of Circle: one thousand cubits and twelve thousand [spans].[79]

"Beginning its measurement of the beautiful sight of Woman from the midst of Height, Depth, Length, and Breadth, in the mystery of the image of *Adam*, [*Qav ha-Middah*] measures the circle of the head on one side of the emanation. The emanation extends, measuring from the circle of the head, with no division at all.[80]

"Measuring on the side of Height in the Circle, ramifying and conveying downward, cinching a cluster, [*Qav ha-Middah*] measured from the head in a circle, calibration of three thousand cubits, all combined as one. Extended and ramified below, without bonding—the measure is six thousand from the sides of the world, and six thousand handbreadths in the Circle.[81]

"Within the emanation shooting out from the *Botsitsa*, this one emanated, having shot out from the midst of that supernal bond through mystery of the *Botsitsa*, measuring in

the Circle for the fourth side. [*Botsitsa*] gauged and calibrated for the right side. The emanation of this side—toward the right, toward the southern gate—measures one thousand, and a thousand, and another thousand on that side, for the four sides of the world, yielding four thousand. This one emanates similarly for all other sides.[82]

"At the east gate stands another emanation that shot out from the former emanation, that had calibrated a measure. That other measure stands in the middle, measuring one thousand on that side in the middle.[83]

"Deepening in Depth, [*Botsitsa*] measuring a measure in the mystery of Faith, in the mystery of Six Orders of the Mishnah. The Six Orders abide in the Depth, in the mystery of the *Botsitsa* of that emanation. The Six Orders stand in the gauging of Year. שנה (*Shanah*), Year—allusion to the mystery of those six orders of the Mishnah (as we have mentioned).[84]

"The primordial emanation that descended and shot out from the midst of that cluster (that we have mentioned)—its length calibrates an emanation. One million myriad cubits stand within it, extending to the final spark, which has no light at all. This mystery is bequeathed to the scions of faith for the purpose of measuring. Mystery of the verse: *a thousand thousands serving Him, a myriad of myriads attending Him* (Daniel 7:10). This is the mystery for measuring (as we have mentioned).[85]

"Second emanation (that we mentioned) descended, shooting out from the first emanation, stands in the middle. Its Length fashions a measure within, on that side: 1,000 myriads, 775,000 worlds. Your mnemonic: *And from the 1,775 shekels he made hooks for the pillars* (Exodus 38:28).[86]

"Happy are those who know how to divulge supreme secrets within Faith, knowing how to enter on the right and left fittingly, without shame. Of this is written *The*

enlightened will shine [*like the radiance of the sky*] (Daniel 12:3).[87]

"Spark of Adamantine Darkness—after measuring, it gathers back up within, abiding within each and every rung within the structure, sustaining them. Afterward, it endures and ascends, enveloped until it soars upward and is treasured away, concealed, unknown—[58d] everything remaining enduringly. Then, that which shines, shines—issuing rivers and waters to saturate all.[88]

"This concludes the mystery of *Botsitsa de-Qardinuta*, Spark of Adamantine Darkness, uniting all sides of faith within it. The *Botsitsa* endures within the Concealed of Concealed, ascending and descending. One who knows this secret of wisdom can cleave to and fashion measures on all sides, even coming to know supernal mysteries of his Master through mysteries of wisdom, in order to understand and cleave. One who knows and gazes—happy is his lot in this world and in the world that is coming! For this principle will keep a person's legs steady for the sake of entering behind the curtain and walking on the straight path. Happy is he in this world, and happy is he in the world that is coming!"[89]

מרכבת יחזקאל

Merkevet Yeḥezqel

EZEKIEL'S CHARIOT

God spoke all these words, saying… (Exodus 20:1).[1]

Rabbi Shim'on, Rabbi El'azar, and Rabbi Abba were sitting in assembly. Rabbi El'azar asked, "If it pleases Father, could he speak a word regarding the Account of the Chariot?"

[Rabbi Shim'on] replied, "But we have learned in the Mishnah, 'Nor [may one expound the Account of] the Chariot in the presence of one!'"[2]

He replied, "Would Father prefer that I relate what I learned from him?"

Rabbi Abba departed—[for] Rabbi Shim'on said to Rabbi Abba, "Prepare a table for yourself, while El'azar remains with me."[3]

Rabbi El'azar opened, saying, "*In the thirtieth year, on the fifth day of the fourth month, when I was in the midst of the exile, by the River Kevar, the heavens opened and I saw visions of God* (Ezekiel 1:1). This verse—its speaker is unnamed! If Ezekiel, behold it is written subsequently: *It happened that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel the priest* (ibid., 3). But this verse should have preceded, since it was uttered under authorization, followed by *In the thirtieth*…. Well, in truth, he spoke it—with the authorization of the blessed Holy One he spoke all that he spoke, and revealed all that he revealed.[4]

“This verse was established by the companions—this prophecy occurred when *Shekhinah* descended with Israel into exile, and the supernal, sparkling glory was concealed. Even the gaze of the one called Radiance of *Shekhinah*, from which the latter is nourished, did not gleam. Upper *Shekhinah* flew off from Her children, and permission was given to seventy other years from the kingdom of Babylon to reign.”[5]

Suddenly, a blaze swooped down from above, surrounding them, and they heard the sound of heavenly legions from the midst of the fire. Rabbi Shim’on smiled and said to him, “Open your mouth and let your words shine forth!”[6]

He opened, saying, “*The fourth* (ibid., 1). This signifies King David, fourth support of the heavenly throne, amid the three other supernal supports—mystery of *the thirtieth year* (ibid.). The fourth support is bonded as one with them; and on account of his being together with them, without separation, it says *on… the fourth*, not *and on… the fourth. On the fifth day of the… month*—rungs below; adornment of the moon [37d] for bonding with them.[7]

“With the retreat upward of Upper *Shekhinah* from Her offspring, none of the rungs have tranquility or light; and thus the heavens clothed themselves with blackness—sackcloth was their raiment. Then it is written *I was in the midst of the exile* (Ezekiel 1:1), since *Shekhinah* had descended into exile, supernal Glory was exposed, and the sun eclipsed.[8]

“While in this instance, this verse is expounded in anguish, at a different time—all the while that light stood poised to shine and thrones were consummated in the light of each other—the holy, Upper Throne shone its beam upon the patriarchs, from the beginning. When they glowed from the midst of that supernal light, everything was agleam, as is written: ויהי (*Va-yhi*), *And it happened, in the thirtieth year* (ibid.). At that time, the supernal light was among them, as

is said: ויהי (*Va-yhi*), *And there was, light* (Genesis 1:3). Once *va-yhi* was stated and the light hidden away, not primed for shining, then here too *va-yhi*—that light that shone for thirty years, gleaming from before, from the midst of the supernal light. *Va-yhi, And it happened*—previously.[9]

"This is what we have learned: *And there was light*. It does not say והיה אור (*Ve-hayah or*), *And there will be light*, but rather ויהי אור (*Va-yhi or*), *And there was light*—already there. Here, too, *va-yhi, and it happened, in the thirtieth year*. It does not say והיה (*ve-hayah*), *and it will be*, but rather, *va-yhi, and it happened*, already existing. This is the mystery of כבר נהר על (*al Nahar Kevar*), *by the River of Already*—light that already existed.[10]

"*The fourth* (Ezekiel 1:1)—King David, as stated. He was established as fourteenth for shining; fourth—actually! *On the fifth* (ibid.)—King Solomon, who consummated the throne, as is written: *Solomon sat upon the throne of YHVH as king* (1 Chronicles 29:23).[11]

"Up to this point, light shone on all; from here onward, light began to be veiled, as is written: *I was in the midst of the exile* (Ezekiel 1:1). Mystery of *I*—progressively darkening, as is written: *in the midst of the exile*, and not *in exile*, indicating that She was approaching exile, darkening incrementally until the light was eclipsed and occluded.[12]

"Why was the light occluded? [Ezekiel] continued, *By the River of Already*—(ibid.), regarding the light that had already existed but departed, separating from Her. Once that light that already existed, primordial light, separated from Her, *the heavens ruptured—ruptured*, actually![13]

"At the beginning there existed a single bond, a unified principle—right contained in left, and left contained in right—fashioning the heavens that encompasses them both. When the right turned back, as is written *He has withdrawn His right hand* (Lamentations 2:3), then—actually!—*the heavens ruptured, rupture* from the perfection of that initial bond. Gloom encased the site, as is written: *The heavens*

were clothed with gloom (Isaiah 50:3). They were deprived of the River of Already, primordial light that had already existed—a breach appeared, as it were. This is the mystery of *though Abraham does not know us* (ibid. 63:16). Since *Abraham does not know us*, nor shine upon us, similarly *and Israel does not recognize us* (ibid.), for *the heavens ruptured*, the bond was gone, the light obliterated.[14]

"*I saw visions of God* (Ezekiel 1:1). Originally concealed within the supernal light, not revealed, now I see them in the darkness, screaming outside, as is said: *Behold, the Erelim cried…* (Isaiah 33:7). I see them shrieking *outside* (ibid.), having descended into exile that is *outside*—outside the Holy Land, beyond their domain.[15]

"They wept two wailings: one for having descended into exile, outside their domain; and the other on account of *the heavens ruptured*, with peace nowhere to be found. Two wailings, as is written: *cried outside*—one wailing. *Angels of peace* [*sob bitterly*]—those who come from the side of peace weep over peace, in the absence of the River of Already.[16]

"*On the fifth day of the month—it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin* (Ezekiel 1:2). *On the fifth day of the month*—they have already established this, but it was the day of *Shavu'ot*, the very day that Israel received the Torah on Mount Sinai and heard אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I* (Exodus 20:2). [38a] Then, *Yet Anokhi will not forget you* (Isaiah 49:15) is fulfilled. He remembered them on that day; and *Shekhinah* descended into exile to dwell with Israel.[17]

"That day, *fifth day of the month* (Ezekiel 1:1), was the day of fifty gates, when Israel received the Torah at Mount Sinai. Diverse chariots, numerous legions descended, encircling the throne of supernal glory; and the blessed Holy One was sitting within the heavenly glory of the King, ruling in majesty. The heavens and lofty heights rested upon Mount Sinai, bestowing the Torah.[18]

“Then joy prevailed before Him, beyond that of the day on which heaven and earth were created. For heaven and earth were created conditionally—not established enduringly until the day that Torah was bestowed upon Israel. Once Israel received the Torah, the world wafted fragrance; and the heavens and earth were stabilized.[19]

“As much as that was a joyous day before the blessed Holy One, this was a day of confusion and anguish—banishment of *Shekhinah* from the holy realm. Once this prophecy was revealed, it was revealed on this day alone—the day on which the blessed Holy One remembered on Israel’s behalf the covenant of Mount Sinai, when they received the Torah.[20]

“היה היה (*Hayoh hayah*), *Happening it happened, that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Kevar, and there the hand of YHVH came upon him* (Ezekiel 1:3). From here we learn that Ezekiel had divine sanction to reveal, and he was given heavenly permission to reveal everything that he revealed.[21]

“*Happening it happened*. Affirmation upon affirmation—affirmation of the event and the prophecy.[22]

“The name of the blessed Holy One transmitted to Moses: supernal holy name אהיה (*Ehyeh*)—the name that provided protection during the exile. Had it been complete in the mystery of consummation, they would not have been detained in exile at all; but א (*alef*) vanished from the name, leaving היה (*hyh*). Since *alef* departed, [היה (*hyh*)] was doubled to protect them—one mystery. With that name, *Shekhinah* descended into exile, albeit abandoned by the letter א (*alef*).[23]

“This prophecy was revealed to Ezekiel in the land of the Chaldeans, lacking the letter *alef* from the mystery of the holy name, demonstrating that the prophecy occurred only על נהר (*al Nahar*), *upon the River, of Already*—על נהרא (*al nahara*),

regarding the light, that already existed, having vanished from this name.[24]

"Thus, *the hand of YHVH came upon him there*—first the *word of YHVH* and then the *hand of YHVH*—all one, a single mystery. But at first, it did not occur properly, for this was not the place for *Shekhinah* to be revealed to him! This verse was uttered by Holy Spirit, attesting that Ezekiel had been given permission, and that all he said came through the spirit of prophecy.[25]

"Up to this point, Scripture narrated the mystery of the account [of the chariot], but from here on begin celestial secrets.[26]

I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north… (Ezekiel 1:4).[27]

"Here begins the revelation of mysteries, not to be revealed to anyone but those who are wise of heart, who know how to interpret them. וָאֶרְא (*Va-ere*), *I looked* (ibid.)—it is not written וָאֶרְאֶה (*Va-er'eh*), *I looked* (ibid., 1), because in truth supernal *he* had vanished; he saw only what he was permitted, and he was not granted permission to reveal to others. He looked below upon visions that were more clearly revealed. There it is written וָאֶרְאֶה (*Va-er'eh*), *I looked*, whereas here, even though he alludes to supernal matters, he was like one peering from behind a screen. Consequently, ה (*he*) disappeared as a result of this distress.[28]

"*A stormy wind coming from the north*—mystery (which we have mentioned) of coming to pulverize monarchies before the wicked Nebuchadnezzar. רוח סערה (*Ru'aḥ se'arah*), *Stormy wind*—מסער (*mas'ar*), blasting, everything.[29]

"This is the mystery that the blessed Holy One revealed to Elijah, as is written: *Behold, a great, mighty wind, tearing out mountains and smashing rocks…. YHVH was not in the wind* (1 Kings 19:11)—actually! *After the wind—an*

earthquake; YHVH was not in the earthquake (ibid.). This is the *great cloud* (Ezekiel 1:4), for it was that cloud that stormed and journeyed, on account of its greatness. *After the earthquake—fire; YHVH was not in the fire* (1 Kings 19:11)—actually! This was the *flashing fire* (Ezekiel 1:4).[30]

"All these are shells of the kernel—revolving—this one within that, that within this. The *radiance* encompasses the *fire* within it, as is written: *and a radiance surrounding it* (Ezekiel 1:4). This is [38b] innermost of all, uniting with kernel.[31]

"Here is the mystery of the four kingdoms, surrounding all. *Stormy wind*—Kingdom of Babylon. *Great cloud*—Kingdom of Medea. *Flashing fire*—Kingdom of Edom. *Radiance surrounding it*—Kingdom of Greece, surrounded by radiance, but not itself radiant, as is written: *surrounding*. For there is none among all the kingdoms that approach the path of faith as they do. Here, too, among these shells, none approach the kernel like this one. Surrounded by radiance, but radiance is not in it. Radiance emerges from the kernel—shining and encircling.[32]

"These four kingdoms alternate: when one prevails over the others, they are all cast aside; and the one who rules enters to receive from that radiance—prevailing, drawing near.[33]

From within it, like the color of החשמל (*ha-ḥashmal*), *amber* (Ezekiel 1:4).[34]

"They have established that *ḥashmal* alludes to חיון אשא ממללן (*Ḥeivan esha memallelan*), fiery beings speaking. They are a glowing beam ascending and descending, flaming fire existing and not existing—no one can fix it in one place. Neither eyes nor vision can get a bead on it; this, not this; now in one place, now another; ascending, descending. In this vision, what is concealed is concealed; what is hidden, hidden—mystery called *ḥashmal*.[35]

“A prophet has to gaze deeper, to know and contemplate with clarity of heart and eye. He is greatest of all—would that he could comprehend it! All that he gazes upon for contemplation and comprehension is through the speculum that does not shine, not through the speculum that shines. For no prophet merited to gaze there other than the faithful prophet, who possessed all the keys of the house. All other prophets intending to gaze into the *ḥashmal*—their thoughts in turmoil, hearts agitated, and they would depart from corporeal awareness. Then they would see whatever they would see, hushed.[36]

“*Ḥashmal*—color of flashing, sparkling fire, ascending and descending, sparking and flaring. From this side a single spark shoots out: a vision scintillating and flashing; existing and not existing; abiding and not abiding. Another of the same color emerges from this side, and another from that side, and so on for all four. This one speaks to that one, that one speaking to this one—and so on for them all, until they constitute one. Then sparks sparkle in a single spark, ascending and descending, moving and fixed, seen and not seen. It is this and not this. None can comprehend it. The sparks resume their appearance as the living beings as before, this one speaking to that one; then, thoughts are in disarray, the heart agitated. This is the mystery of *ḥashmal*.[37]

“Deeper within, mystery in a whisper, mystery abiding within the kernel. This is as is written: *From within it, a likeness of four* חיות (*ḥayyot*), *living beings, and this was their appearance* (ibid., 5). *From within it*—inner mystery in the kernel, abiding within heavenly mysteries, in the supernal image, from the midst of all the shells encircling the kernel, as stated. *From within it*—within what? Within the one called *ḥashmal*.[38]

“Now if you ask: Here is written חשמל (*ḥashmal*), and there is written חשמלה (*ḥashmalah*) (ibid. 8:2), indicating that *ḥashmal* is masculine and *ḥashmalah* is feminine; since here is written *ḥashmal*, why is it written ומתוכה (*u-mi-tokhah*), *from*

within her (ibid. 1:5)? Well, the explanation is that all those below are feminine—and whoever rules, this one over that one, the lower one is called feminine. All of these are feminine, this one within that one, and that one within this one.[39]

"*Likeness of four ḥayyot, living beings*. Likeness of whom? Likeness of the supernal creatures—from them one can envision the hidden ones that cannot be seen.[40]

"Here it is called דמות (*demut*), *likeness*, but it is also called צלם (*tselem*), *image*, as is written: בצלמנו כדמותנו (*be-tsalmeinu ki-dmuteinu*), *in our image, according to our likeness* (Genesis 1:26). And it is written *in the image of God He made the human* (ibid. 9:6), and *in the image of God He made him* (ibid. 5:1).[41]

"Ah, this is a supernal mystery! When all the souls—fruit of the blessed Holy One—fly out from the river that flows from Eden, they are acquired by the One who takes them. As they emerge before the blessed Holy One, each and every one of them is ushered into a figure, to be delineated in the place called *demut, likeness*, that of the four *ḥayyot*, living beings. [38c] There, each one is traced according to the figure fitting for it. From there all the figures emerge, traced according to their figure, each according to its paradigm, like one infused into a mold to be limned.[42]

"This דמות (*demut*), *likeness*, generates a likeness. צלם (*Tselem*), *Image*, generates an image. חיות (*Ḥayyot*), *Creatures*, emerged from the force of Creature—who is male—but since they are female, they are called חיות (*ḥayyot*), *creatures*, inhering in the four sides of the world, embracing all troops and legions. *Demut, Likeness*, in the mystery above and in the mystery below—acquiring figures from above, acquiring figures below. They comprise the figure—precisely!—of all sides, emitting figures of all sides above and below.[43]

"After it has said *demut*, it is written *this was* מראיהן (*mar'eihen*), *their appearance* (Ezekiel 1:5). The explanation is that it was displayed before him—something unfamiliar

was shown to him—as is said: *This is the fashioning of the lamp stand* (Numbers 8:4), and *This is how you shall fashion* (Genesis 6:15). Here, too—*this was their appearance*.[44]

"Now, if all the prophets, aside from Moses, the faithful one, had their minds confounded when they approached the midst of the *ḥashmal*, how could this one withstand it? Well, the answer is that he uttered his words with the spirit of prophecy, and it was only on account of [God's] love for Israel that all these visions were revealed outside [the Land]. They were all confounded, all baffled.[45]

"Inner vision is vision perceived through a whisper, as is said: *After the fire, a small, murmuring voice* (1 Kings 19:12). This is the mystery of the figure that envelops all figures within the celestial mirror. Supernal voice in a supernal whisper, from which all figures emerge. Lower voice like the upper voice, gathering and embracing all figures within. Since it occurs in a whisper, when a prophet approaches, his eyes shine and his thoughts are illuminated.[46]

"זה (*Zeh*), *This, was their appearance*—they appear only through the mystery of the speculum that shines above, their looking-glass, mirror for all. All shine in that light.[47]

"*Ḥashmal*—four sparks, flaring and sparkling, interpenetrating each other. A single corpus is formed from them, called *ḥashmal*. Here, too, these four living beings are encompassed within each other, since they, too, are stationed on four sides. The one on the east side is contained within the west side; and the one on the west side is contained within the east side. The one on the south side is contained within the north side; and the one on the north side is contained within the south side.[48]

"Once they have all been intertwined, a single corpus is fashioned from them—mystery called *Adam*, despite the difference of countenances on their respective sides.[49]

"From the midst of these—inner secret of the point that stands upon them—diverse legions go forth, according to

their species.[50]

"*Adam*—Male and female. Mystery of the male is the letter ן (final *nun*), mystery of consummated man. This letter rules over the point that is above the four living beings. In this mystery, inner mystery of all—all those other legions and all those troops are called by this name, as is written: *thousands of thousands* (Psalms 68:18).[51]

"Even though its meaning has been established, the mystery here is that they emerge from the mystery of the inner kernel, universal principle—שנאן (*shin'an*), *thousands*. Mystery of the kernel is שור (*shor*), ox, נשר (*nesher*), eagle, אריה (*aryeh*), lion. *Adam* encompasses them, comprising them within ן (final *nun*)—the kernel joining it all as one, in the inner mystery. They are the mystery of שנאן (*shin'an*), *thousands*; therefore they are called *thousands of shin'an*.[52]

"When they gaze fleetingly, then *the image of their face was a human face* (Ezekiel 1:10). Afterward the faces separate, each and every one to its own side. When they are all veiled, not gazing upward into the mystery above them, then no face is seen at all other than the face of the human—face that integrates all faces, all sealed before that face. Consequently, all faces—when they gaze upon the face of *Adam*—quake and quiver before it.[53]

"Celestial face emerges from the midst of the supernal mystery, within inscribed letters. This is the mystery of *Adam*, all encompassed within. *Adam*—essential principle, mystery of *from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven* (Deuteronomy 4:32). *Adam* is the middle, bottom, and top—all in one ensemble. ם (Final *mem*)—sealed above, containing all below. ד (*Dalet*) below—containing numerous chariots and legions as one. א (*Alef*)—mystery of all in the middle, [38d] acquiring for all sides. Thus, *Adam* is the mystery of all from one end to the other, aside from the supernal mystery abiding within Thought and Will, before an infinite ascent.[54]

"*The legs of each were a single rigid leg*… (Ezekiel 1:7). This mystery—after explaining mysteries of the body,

Scripture returns, descending to the legs and hooves.[55]

"They approach the sparks of the *ḥashmal*—the outer *ḥashmal*, since there are others that are also called by this name that shoot out from this *ḥashmal*. They all emerge when the living beings align their legs and approach the sparks of the *ḥashmal*. Then the sparks flare—ascending and descending—and all those called by this name issue forth.[56]

"The *ḥashmal* surrounds them, round and round. Its sparks descend below to the place called Little Earth. There, in that Earth, all species of precious stones are racing—crystals, sparkling pearls, and emeralds.[57]

"When the light of the *ḥashmal* flares and sparkles—ascending and descending—and the four sides embrace one other, Little Earth glows and the precious stones and gems race, rising until they reach the southern gate. Sealed treasures are found there, and four hundred and seventy portals—numerical equivalent of קרקע (*qarqa*), earth. Gallitsur is appointed over them.[58]

"When the *ḥashmal* illuminates sparks for the four sides, a sound goes forth from above, arousing from between the wings when they beat against each other. These are the wings that produce sound, as is said: *I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters* (Ezekiel 1:24). When that sound—comprising four sounds—issues, it encounters those sparks, dividing into four sounds.[59]

"A voice journeys toward Gallitsur; the light of the *ḥashmal* is aroused in that voice, and a single utterance is fashioned from it. Within that utterance another utterance is aroused, concealed in a hush. When it reaches Gallitsur, two hundred fourteen celestial secrets are revealed.[60]

"A second voice journeys toward Ana'el—mighty angel appointed over eighteen thousand myriads of legions that serve in a different earth, suffused in the light of all colors. This one is called Purple Earth, gleaming with all manners of light that beam from the *ḥashmal*. There within that earth are sunken twelve thousand myriads of supernal gems.

When the sparks of the *ḥashmal* ascend—penetrating one another—all the gems that are sunken in that earth rise and approach the eastern gate. There are six million open gates there, and the great Ana'el is appointed over them.[61]

"When the voice is aroused from above, the light of *ḥashmal* strikes it, transforming it into utterance. With that utterance, another sealed utterance is stirred. When it reaches the angel Ana'el, three hundred and sixty-five supernal רזין (*razin*), secrets, are disclosed, embedded in the signet of the Seal of Truth. Then—with fear, dread, quaking, and trembling—songs and praises soar up to the Master of All.[62]

"The light inscribed within the Ineffable Name is engraved in forty-two letters; and it issues from the chief of the archons, who presides over all other legions—he is called Sandalfon. That light covers those two earths—from one earth to this earth. This is the mystery of *paneled* בארז (*be-erez*), *with cedarwood, from earth to earth* (1 Kings 7:7). Sandalfon—why is he called this? Since all mysteries of supernal faces enter there and are locked within him, like a sandal into which one inserts the entire foundation and torso of one's body.[63]

"This great angel serves the inner faces. Hewn within him are the mysteries of letters inscribed and engraved, protruding in the light that envelops those earths. When this one ties wreaths for his Master, those letters soar up into that light and are crowned by those wreaths. Then that light returns and is enwrapped in its place, while the letters rise up in those crowns, in the mysteries of the Holy Name.[64]

"*The legs of each were a single straight leg*… (Ezekiel 1:7)—joined as one, for they are as one. United to follow an upright path in the company of companions of the Holy Side, to avoid consorting with the Other [39a] Side. All are companions in uprightness as one, with legs straight. Thus,

they appear to the prophet as known rungs. All these rungs are called legs of the living beings, springing forth from them. They appear like legs of the body, with their distinctive arrangement, all according to measure.[65]

"*The feet of each were like a single calf's hoof* (ibid.)—in their bonding of this side and that side. But they lack toes, for toes would manifest other forces, of another face. Pertaining to this, humans display certain forces above with their fingers, and other forces below with their feet; but these living beings do not have other forces of the Other Side inscribed upon them. This is why these are called *straight leg* (ibid.), since they are sealed off on that side, constituting a single hoof.[66]

"Even though there is no separation with toes split for other forces of the Other Side, they do bear a single imprint—providing a base for the Other Side. Thus, they appear below as a *calf's hoof*, but not a hoof for diversion. Even though it is a *calf's hoof*, it is *straight*, never deviating.[67]

"Within that company, one spark and flame burst out toward one side, to the right; and one spark and flame burst out toward the other side, to the left. These sparks and flames join as one, sparkling on every side. Troops and legions are fashioned from them; and they are all called 'legs of the living creatures' since they were generated by the legs. They all proceed, roving as agents in the world. They become garbed in a body below, appearing as others appear—executing their assignments in the world. Then they return in the evening and nighttime, and sanctify the name of their Master.[68]

"*The image of their face was a human face* (ibid., 10)—image of that upper face, traced in a hidden tracing, faces gathered through subtle striking. Image of the inner face is a tracing of a human visage. Sparks sparkle. Spark flares

from within the hidden *ḥashmal*, concealed and treasured away—existent and non-existent.[69]

"Light sparkles. Fire ignites, flickering in the flames of the blaze. Wind shimmers, unifying in its colors, striking an impression in a single compact. United below, united above, hues united on diverse sides.[70]

"Color of the hidden light grasps, shines, and gleams in its gleaming. This light grasps and seizes, enfolding the light of flaming fire and blazing conflagration. These two are irreconcilable. From a hidden jewel—totally unrevealed—a breeze of incense wafts, composed of twelve celestial spices. From the midst of the ascent of those two irreconcilable ones, that fragrance joins them, and they settle into their places.[71]

"Then that breeze—wafting from the midst of the glow of the hidden light and the glow of the flaming fire—is tinted, and they are reconciled, abiding within it. Then the tracing of the face of a human is traced there—including all faces. This is the color that encompasses all colors, visage that embraces all visages. Once they are all arrayed fittingly within the throne, then they all bear the single image of *Adam*.[72]

"This is the mystery: When they gaze toward the east, they all bear the singular image of *Adam*, because the mystery of *Adam* is entrenched there. When they gaze toward the south, all faces bear a single visage, visage of the lion—site of power and force of all. When they gaze toward the north, all faces bear a single visage, visage of the ox—site of goring, from Hard Judgment. And when they gaze toward the west, all faces bear a single image—visage of the eagle—site of *like an eagle rousing his nest, hovering over his fledglings* (Deuteronomy 32:11). The way of the eagle is to cleave constantly to the heavens—object of the eagle's yearning to soar and cleave. Consequently, it is in the west.[73]

"Since all the faces change in accord with the direction of their gaze, it is written of them all, of each and every image, *the four of them* (Ezekiel 1:10). Face of the human, face of the lion, *the four of them*, and face of the eagle, *the four of them*.[74]

"This is when they are configured for the throne. [39b] Then the appearance of the faces accords with the direction the throne is facing, in keeping with the direction it travels, as is written: *wherever the spirit would go, they went* (Ezekiel 1:12). But when they are not journeying and are not configured for the throne, then each and every one is distinct, with its own fitting image. Nevertheless, each and every one cleaves to the face of its fellow—all displaying their faces cleaving to each, encompassed within each other, each contained within its fellow.[75]

"One side says '*Holy*,' another side says '*holy*,' another side says '*holy*,' and another side says, '*YHVH of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory*' (Isaiah 6:3).[76]

"*Human hands were under their wings*… (Ezekiel 1:8)—to receive penitents, for the hand of the blessed Holy One is spread open to receive those who do *teshuvah*. *Under their wings*—why? For the sake of modesty, since penitents should be modest, so that others are unaware, as is written: *whose sin is covered* (Psalms 32:1).[77]

"This is a mystery: They do not raise their hands up like humans, who can raise their hands above their heads. They are different, since their hands do not extend beyond their wings—since their wings and faces are separated above. This is as is said: *their faces and wings were separated above* (Ezekiel 1:11). They are separated when they are not arrayed within the throne, as we have said. These hands cannot be seen at all—allowing the side to enter if they were revealed. Of this is written *under their wings* (ibid., 8).[78]

“When they process, their wings joined together to be on the upright path, they journey together as one, at one time, at one moment—all ascending as one to the throne above. But they do not know their destination, neither looking nor gazing on account of panic and trembling. From conveying and raising the holy throne their sweat is transformed into the River of Fire, flowing ceaselessly.[79]

“The sweat they exude from the burden of travel forms drops, dripping from four kinds of fire. White fire drips red fire and green fire; red fire drips black fire, white fire, and green fire; green fire drips red fire and white fire; black fire drips red fire.[80]

“The second white is not the same as the first white; and this black fire is not the same as that first black fire. This is the case for all the colors—these are unlike those—the first, second, and third. Similarly for them all, when these fires drizzle, embrace, and join as one, flickering flames fly up, striking each other.[81]

“From that simultaneous striking, all destroying angels who torture sinners in Hell are created. From those flames, the blaze of Hell is created below, for these emissaries of affliction are assigned to these flames to scorch sinners there. Their mystery is there, as is written: *They escaped from fire; and fire shall consume them* (Ezekiel 15:7).[82]

“When they journey, they all journey toward the face of the one appointed over that direction. When Spirit arouses to travel to the east, it strikes the face of the one appointed to that side. He ventures first; and all go with him as one, as is written: *Each could move in the direction of any of its faces; wherever the spirit would go, they went* (Ezekiel 1:12).[83]

“This Spirit is a speaking spirit, Spirit that embraces all spirits within it—concealed Spirit, hidden within them. This is the spirit that is encompassed within mystery below, corresponding to three sanctifications, sanctifying as one. They are *holy, holy, holy*—corresponding to three spirits,

three times. This is as is written here: *wherever the spirit would go, they went* (Ezekiel 1:12)—one. *Wherever the spirit would go, they went* (ibid., 20)—two. *For the spirit of the living being* (ibid.)—three, since this Spirit comprises three spirits, mystery of the supernal, holy living beings. They are the mystery within the three sanctifications that descend from that highest holiness—concealed spirit from which all sanctifications are suspended.[84]

[39c] "*The image of the living beings, their appearance, was like burning coals of fire*… (Ezekiel 1:13). דמות (*Demut*), *Image*—a single form that they clothe themselves in, garbed in fire. But he saw only an image of the appearance of the stewards—fiery coals.[85]

"*Coals of fire*—these are the ones called מראיהם (*mar'eihem*), *their mirrors*, mirror of living beings. They gaze through [this mirror] to see a vision of the mirror that displays all colors. Thus the seraphim are like a mirror through which one perceives faces of the living beings. For they are all garbed—this one in that, this one the mirror of that.[86]

"*Image of the living beings*—it does not say *their faces*, nor is it necessary, since all their faces were spoken of at the beginning. Now it speaks of the image of their appearance. *Like coals of fire*. Who are the *coals of fire*? These are the seraphim. *Their appearance*—these are the אופנים (*ofanim*), *wheels*—garments worn for gazing upon their visages and countenances.[87]

"Their sparkling abides in the ones called *torches* (ibid., 13). Who are they? Lower *ḥashmalim* that emerge from the lower *ḥashmal*. This mystery inheres in supernal mystery above, in the inner *ḥashmal* since it is all one paradigm, above and below.[88]

"This concludes the mystery of the *ḥashmal*—colors seen only through a mirror. Mirror within mirror—this mirror within that—as is written: *From the mirror of his loins*

upward… and from the mirror of his loins downward (ibid., 27).[89]

"*Moving about among the living beings* (ibid., 13)—endowed between two sides, hewn out there in the engraving of Her face. This is as is written: *Set me as a seal upon your heart* (Song of Songs 8:6). Since this precious stone—a jewel—travels between two sides, She has light for illumination and to exude upon all the other sparkling gems.[90]

"*The fire had a radiance* (ibid.)—radiance coming from the right side and embraced by the left, as is the left by the right—fire scintillating and sparkling from that radiance. The radiance illuminates that gem, investing a mirror within Her for gazing upon Her beauty.[91]

"The radiance is the sparkling of fiery sparks, glowing red. Thus, when He enters, penetrating within that gem, She is beautiful to behold. This gem is perceived through two colors: now colored, since she is dark at first; but once She is refined to receive light, a ray arouses from the right side, and She shines in its whiteness. Once illuminated in whiteness, She is like a crystal. Until now She does not have a mirror to see Her beauty, until the left side arrives in that red radiance. The redness of the radiance enters into Her, and then She is beautiful in appearance, a dazzling spectacle to gaze upon. She is a precious stone, perfected in colors—like a gorgeous woman appearing in white and red. Then letters sparkle within Her and lightning flashes, darting into that sparkling—illuminating momentarily in white and red, red and white.[92]

"Holy mystery—tincturing other gems from that precious stone called smaragd. Since the dye originates in the glow of ברק (*baraq*), lightning, it is called ברקת (*bareqet*), smaragd, named after that name. This jewel—supernal gem—is imbued with twelve colors that shine within those two. From the sparks that sparkle, shooting out, Her twelve

stones are colored, in three columns. Since they have been tinctured by Her, they are called by that name—actually![93]

"*The living beings darting to and fro* (ibid., 14)—shining and hidden, revealed and concealed, present and not present. Like the light that shines on a wall, sometimes seen here, sometimes elsewhere; existing, not existing. Engraved letters enduring, not enduring; shining, not shining. Sometimes glowing with one color, sometimes another, sometimes bearing this name, sometimes another. No one can fathom these lights.[94]

"*YHVH*. Light that rises in this name encompasses all lights consummately. Sometimes [39d] descending, its light returns in a different hue, ascending in a different name, *Elohim*; sometimes, *El*, sometimes *Tseva'ot*, and sometimes *Shaddai*. This is the case for all names of the blessed Holy One.[95]

"Since the place from which they emerge is hidden, and since it flows from a hidden spring, each appears accordingly—no one can fathom them. This is the mystery of a vessel of water reflecting the sun on a wall. Just as they are *darting to and fro*, so too in heart and mind. It is otherwise for true prophets—who gaze through the ones below, since they abide in the mystery of the speculum that does not shine; through them the prophets can see as if from behind a wall.[96]

"This concludes the image of those supernal mysteries. Now, below.[97]

As I gazed on the creatures—behold—I saw one wheel on the ground… (Ezekiel 1:15).[98]

'*As I gazed on the creatures*—gazing through a speculum that does not shine. Through viewing these, he could look upon those concealed and treasured away.[99]

"*Behold—one wheel on the ground*—Metatron, higher than them by a distance of five hundred years. Metatron, Mitatron, Zevul, Servant, Zevuliel—five. In accord with his master's missions, so are his names multiplied in four dimensions, to the four corners of the earth.[100]

"He ties wreaths for his Master and rules over the mysteries of 4,500 rivers of balsam that flow ceaselessly from the midst of thirteen other hidden ones. Forty-five million palaces hidden within those lights stand before him, and he is deputized over them—every time he enters and exits, 1,500 firmaments quake before him.[101]

"Twelve thousand myriads on his right and 12,000 myriads on his left; 12,000 myriads in front of him and 12,000 myriads behind him—all these legions gleam from a single, sparkling flame that shoots out from him. The letters of the Ineffable Name are engraved in that flame, sparkling and scintillating from its midst. When [the angels] gaze upon the light of the engraved, hewn letters, they all tremble and quake, traveling toward the sparkling of the letters.[102]

"From this flame, other wheels shine, journeying in other chariots below, within interlinked palaces. This is as is written: *a wheel inside a wheel* (Ezekiel 1:16), blending in one another, penetrating one another, heads within heads, these from those, with faces divided to their different sides.[103]

"They all travel in the direction of the faces by means of the light through which they gaze toward those faces. When they look toward their journey, they see that light shining upon the luminous destination. They all proceed, journeying with hewn letters of the holy name shining upon all. It carries them all within the supernal wind that carries all legions.[104]

"Metatron, supreme angel, abides enduringly in the holy name, and through its mystery conveys all legions to four faces—four images; to the four corners of the earth. He

contains the name *Shaddai*; and all proclaim this name in connection with the supernal holy name.[105]

"Twelve celestial keys with the mystery of the holy name delivered into the hand of Metatron; four of those keys—four mysteries of lights that disperse.[106]

"The first key is called Scintillating Light, hidden and treasured away, shooting out and shining, colorless. Its sparkling cannot be gazed upon and it displays no color, but it flashes scintilla to the eyes, and then is treasured away, imperceptible.[107]

"The second key is called Shining Light. A joy to gaze upon, it is sometimes white, sometimes green, and sometimes neither this nor that.[108]

"The third key is called Radiant Light, since it radiates and shines. This is the radiance that shines for all other lights, woven into all colors. This light—from the same radiance of the firmament that is above the creatures, as is written: כזוהר (*ke-zohar*), *like the radiance, of the sky* (Daniel 12:3). [40a] It is contained within ten paths that emerge from the thirty-two concealed paths.[109]

"The fourth key is called Light of Understanding, for it bestows understanding within the heart to know, gaze upon, and fathom celestial secrets. This light, delighting the heart, conveys the light of wisdom and understanding for knowing and gazing.[110]

"These are the four celestial keys—all other keys are blended within them. They were all delivered to the supreme archon, Metatron, grand prince—all of them mysteries of his Master, in the engraved mysteries of the holy, ineffable name.

"When they moved, each could move in the direction of any of

"*Any of its four*—the four below them. The four below them are called *sprawlers*, as is said: 'sprawling under

its four sprawlers… (Ezekiel 1:17).[111]

its burden.' Regarding those who lie beneath them, when they want to move, they move. For each one has four wheels, *ofanim*, beneath them; and it is upon these *sprawlers, when they moved, each could move* (ibid.). This is as is written: *When the ḥayyot* (*living creatures*) *moved, the ofanim* (*wheels*) *moved beside them; and when the ḥayyot rose, the ofanim rose, too* (ibid., 19).[112]

"Now, if the *ofanim* are the *sprawlers* of the living beings, it should have said, *when the ofanim moved*! Well, the explanation is that the *ḥayyot* carry those that carry them: just as the ark carries the one who carries it, the holy throne carries the *ḥayyot*.[113]

"But if She carries them, what causes their perspiration? The answer is that their sweat comes from their gazing for understanding, pondering, and cleaving to the hidden and concealed—but they cannot withstand it. This is the cause of their perspiring. Nonetheless, whoever cleaves to supernal holiness carries those who carry them. This is the mystery of *When they moved, each could move in the direction of any of its four sprawlers*.[114]

As for their rims, they had height (Ezekiel 1:18).[115]

"*Their rims*—mystery of the colors of the body. Gleaming and ascending in accord with its measure, from the top of a lamp [above] to the top of a lamp, in accord with its measure below. It revolves in four scintillating colors. Color that shines its light in the mystery of *ḥashmal* above. After its glimmering, it is treasured away amid its colors. Color that scintillates, scintillating its scintilla. Color that radiates the radiance of the embroidered expanse that stands upon them. Color woven of all colors, embraced within them all. This is the body, traced in a tracing, encompassing all in a single

class.[116]

"*They had height* on the upper side, *and they had terror* on the lower side. *They had height—height of the heavens* (Job 22:12). *And they had terror*—terror, for they terrify, frighten, and agitate all. Encircling trepidation wards off any approach to holiness—dread surrounding them on the side below.[117]

"*They had height*—with the ascent of the mirror bearing colors of the heavens; since colors of the heavens constitute the mystery of *height of the heavens*. Who is this? The one who absorbs all colors from the right and left; and when He draws them near, He is called *Height of the heavens. And they had terror*—in the mirror of fear below, in the arrangement of flashing colors, they transform the appearance of unsubtle fire into subtle fire above, in Her joy. This is the one who agitates them all; consequently, *they had height* above, *and they had terror* from below.[118]

"*The rims of all four were covered all over with eyes*—for gazing in all directions. Even though there are masters of eyes who look through a mirror upon others below, these ones have eyes so that they can gaze upon each other all around, in front and behind—since these eyes are all around, on all sides. Consequently, they look here and there, on this side and that. They view what has been [from in front] and what will be, from behind—as is written: *all over*. They look on the right and on the left. They look on the right—upon every path of truth and merit. They look on the left—on every path that is untrue, not based in merit. Thus, they peer in every direction, presiding with discernment over all, gazing upon all sides, beyond what [40b] all others can see.[119]

"Nonetheless, they are unable to gaze above, nor are they granted permission to look. When they yearn to gaze, they all quiver in fear, trembling in terror, all proclaiming forcefully: *Blessed be the glory of* YHVH *from His place* (Ezekiel 3:12).[120]

“*And their rims* (ibid. 1:18), without an explicit description of them—whereas afterward is written *for their rims—of all four—were covered all over with eyes* (ibid.)! The answer is that this pertains to the side that gazes within, toward the hidden point—from that side they have *height*. And they all gaze within, as is said: *all their hind parts were inward* (1 Kings 7:25).[121]

“When Abraham drew near to the blessed Holy One and circumcised himself, he was called complete, as is written: *Walk in My Presence and be* תמים (*tamim*), *complete* (Genesis 17:1). Then he drew near to the mystery of covenant, rising up in the supernal mystery above. But nonetheless, he did not attain what Jacob attained—for Jacob is called איש תם (*ish tam*), *a consummate man* (Genesis 25:27). What is the meaning of *a consummate man*? This mystery is like that of *man of God* (Deuteronomy 33:1), master of the house. Moses is called *man of God*, and Jacob is called *a complete man*—a single mystery.[122]

“Similarly, וגבותם (*ve-gabbotam*), *and their rims*—abiding within. All are full of eyes for looking beyond, and even though they do not look within, *they have height*; and of this is written *their rims were covered all over with eyes*.[123]

“*When the ḥayyot moved*, the *ofanim moved; and when the ḥayyot rose, the ofanim rose, too* (Ezekiel 1:19)—all according to the spirit who moves and presides over them.[124]

“על אשר (*Al asher*), *Whereupon, the spirit would go* (ibid., 20). אל אשר (*El asher*), *Wherever* (ibid., 12), is written, but אשר על (*al asher*), *whereupon*, is also written. The explanation is that this spirit is the one that emerges from concealed spirit—spirit of holiness. When it issues from the midst of the concealment of the throne, struck by the one who dwells upon it, then they all travel as one toward it. This is the meaning of *al asher, whereupon*. *El asher, Wherever*—when the spirit strikes in front of it, but does not rest upon it,

traveling only toward it, conveying them all as one toward that side.[125]

"*Al asher, Whereupon, the spirit would go*.... Upon that concealed and hidden place where supreme spirit rests—all gaze upon it for increased splendor. From that splendor, splendor is increased—horns of the living beings. This splendor sparkles and scintillates in accord with the gaze of the glory of another spirit that emerges from primordial spirit—primordial spirit that is hidden and treasured away in the glorious storehouse.[126]

"This spirit is in the mystery of the Holy Name, comprising the name *Ehyeh* within—Name, Master, and Sovereign. They quiver in fear of this name. When the supreme creatures go forth to move, they gaze into the name of this mystery, trembling in terror, and then journey on in fear and quaking. This is the name that is sovereign over the chariot, with the inscription of three names comprised within it.[127]

"In this mystery are seventy ineffable names that rule over all mysteries and supernal treasures; all legions and troops tremble before them and travel on their account. Within this mystery are comprised twenty-two letters, and all pathways.[128]

"Another spirit emerges from this primordial spirit—spirit that is the origin of the Mystery of Faith on all sides. This spirit is in the mystery of the Holy Name that comprises it and is inscribed upon it—the name *YHVH*—issuing from and inscribed from the midst of the name *Ehyeh*. Even though everything is contained within a single mystery, the name *YHVH* functions analogously, derived from the concealed name *Ehyeh*. This is the mystery that issues from Primordial Spirit.[129]

"Another, lower spirit emerges from this spirit in the mystery of the Holy Name, comprising the name *YHVH Adonai* within. This name is sovereign over the *ḥayyot* and the *ofanim* below.[130]

“This is the mystery above and below. Above, the name *Ehyeh* rules over those supernal *ḥayyot* with the mystery of the Holy Name, as has been said. Below, the name *Adonai* rules over the lower *ḥayyot*, as well as over the *ofanim*.

“Upper *ḥayyot* and upper *ofanim*, lower *ḥayyot* and lower *ofanim*. Upper *ḥayyot*, as has been said. Upper *ofanim*—these constitute the mystery of *His thighs, pillars of marble* (Song of Songs 5:15). Upper *ofanim* are in the mystery below, just as the *ḥayyot* are in the mystery below.[131]

“Upper *ḥayyot*—four. *Ofanim*—four. When one of them bonds with the mystery of *ḥayyot*, then they and the *ofanim* are in the confederation of one-that-is-four. Similarly, below, all are in the mystery of four: *ḥayyot*, four; *ofanim*, four; differentiating [40c] below in this mystery. Here all mysteries are explicated, above and below. This is why it is called מרכבה (*merkavah*), composite. Even though Ezekiel saw only through the mystery below, he could see the mystery above.[132]

“*Wherever the spirit would go* (Ezekiel 1:20). Mystery of *Ehyeh* is the principle of all, ruling over concealed, supernal *ḥayyot*. Consequently, *whereupon the spirit would go*—mystery of *YHVH* by analogy. *For the spirit of the living being* (ibid.)—mystery of *ADNY*. Thus, hidden, engraved mysteries exist within the concealments of this chariot, all existing as one, a single mystery.[133]

“*When these moved, those moved* (ibid., 21). *When these moved*—who are they? If you say the living creatures, it is not so. Rather, this is the mystery of three spirits and three names. When they shimmer, the upper and lower living creatures shine, issuing forth, proceeding. *When these halted, those halted* (ibid.). When these are joined in a single bond, in a whisper, they are everlasting. Then the three spirits are made one; the three names, one. And the blessed Holy One is glorified in grandeur over all.[134]

"*When these rose off the ground, the* ofanim (*wheels*) *rose* (ibid.). When the living beings ascend in the mystery of supernal spirits, they rise *off the ground*—from tending to the lower spirit. The *ofanim* rise alongside them, showing that they are all a single entity, a single mystery with no division.[135]

"*For the spirit of the living being was in the wheels* (ibid.)—the desire of that spirit was in the wheels. For even though Her desire dwells amid the supreme living creatures, Her desire is greater for the *ofanim*.[136]

"Three: two are revealed, one concealed—acting passionately upon that living being. This is as is written: [*The appearance of the wheels*] *and their actions were* כעין תרשיש (*ke-ein tarshish*), *like topaz* (ibid., 16)—תרי שש כעין (*ke-ein trei shesh*), like two of six. This signifies the right and left—two of those six. Of this is written *like*—like their color.[137]

"Up to here, mystery of the living beings in the supernal mystery—the same pattern below.

"*A likeness above the heads of the living being—an expanse* (ibid., 22). *A likeness*—a figure below like the pattern above. Up to this point, one may expound; but from here onward, only one who sees, sees—since permission to gaze is denied. From this expanse and below, one is permitted to see; from the expanse and below, permission is granted to gaze. From the place of looking and above, pathways and avenues are encased, and no eye can behold—it is all sealed.[138]

"*Heads of the living being*—they are chariots, four luminous riverheads for four corners, constituting twelve moons, twelve attributes with one sovereign over them, yielding thirteen. These are called *heads*—sovereigns ruling, lights for all.[139]

"*Expanse*—one bears the mystery of forms that cannot be seen. The other bears neither forms nor colors—not

subject to perception or contemplation; none can grasp it. This is the supernal concealed expanse, treasured away by the One who conceals. He provides delight and endurance to all in the mystery of the name *Ehyeh*, perfection of all names.[140]

"א ה (*Alef, he*)—mystery of the holy chariot in the mystery of four shimmers of the heavenly world. Mystery of four names interlaced in one—three supernal names and one that joins together with them into a single assemblage. ה י (*Yod, he*)—Supernal hidden secret, principle of all. The supernal, concealed expanse—enduring in hiddenness—has a concealed sapphire, most hidden of all, upon it. This one is united and not united with the one that is neither perceptible nor apprehensible, mystery of all, principle of all. May He be blessed and may His Name be blessed—ever blessed—forever and ever![141]

"When this name spreads out below, ן (final *nun*) replaces א (*alef*), a single mystery. Then the expanse below is like the array above—with a single sapphire gemstone above, on top of the expanse. This is the mystery of יה (*yod he*) spreading out the name below, in the mystery of *YHVH*. Sometimes *vav* joins with this name, becoming a single entity, He and His court. Then it is all one, in a single mystery, mystery of mysteries among the holy names.[142]

"*Spread out above their heads* (ibid.)—spread out above, since the living creatures are unable to know or look, even though everything is united, this with that. Actually, this mystery is simply a sign: a person cannot see his head even though it is part of him; all the more so regarding something concealed within. This supernal expanse [40d] is formless, and none can gaze upon it. Beyond, above—closed completely, signet-sealed.[143]

"The expanse is spread out above the heads of the living beings, their nourishment trickling from that expanse. Below, all exist enduringly beneath that expanse. Three

names are suspended from the expanse, explications below of one in its essence: Holy, Merciful, Gracious. Epithets of holy, hidden names, sealed above in the mystery from below—all in the array of this one from that one.[144]

"These holy names are included in the mysteries of faith, constituting their mysteries. All those epithets are suspended from the mystery of the holy name—called concealed living beings—covering names within. The names fly with the epithets, and are covered by them; the blessed Holy One is named by them, as is written: *But I have taken off my gown* (Song of Songs 5:3), to be prepared for Her.[145]

"Epithets are suspended from this expanse and below—veiling the mystery of the holy name. From this expanse and above, epithets are not linked at all. This is as is written: *Below the expanse, their wings are extended toward one another* (Ezekiel 1:23)—concealing the holy mystery. *Below the expanse*—actually! Those wings—veiling supernal, hidden ones in the mysteries of holy names. Wings—cloaks, enveloping the names in concealment. In the time to come, mystery of the holy name will not be veiled, for all the truly righteous will know it unsheathed, and not through epithets. This is the mystery of *Then your Guide will no more be cloaked, but your eyes will watch your Guide* (Isaiah 30:20).[146]

"*Each had another pair, covering*—two, veiling each and every one. The one on the right has one on the right and one on the left; the one on the left has one on the left and one on the right. Thus, they are all interlaced for veiling—these with those.[147]

"*Their bodies* (Ezekiel 1:23)—inner mysteries, essence of the holy names—this is the mystery of their bodies. Nonetheless, these are arrayed like those, as is written: *I heard the sound of their wings like the sound* (ibid., 24). For example, *El, Elohim, YHVH*, while *their wings* are Great, Mighty, Awesome. This is according to the mystery of supreme mysteries, concealing all. In secrecy below, the wings of the

vision exist in quantifiable form, measuring five hundred parasangs. These are the wings of the vision.[148]

"Five sounds here correspond to five celestial, hidden ones above, as is written: *I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, like the sound of Shaddai as they moved, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army*.[149]

"*The sound of their wings*—amid those epithets is one name, like the name in the midst of names within. Which one? *El*, for this name journeys among those epithets; this name is like the name *mighty waters*. From here, this name spreads out to lower ones.[150]

"*Like the sound of Shaddai—Elohim*, for this name is assigned to lower ones, and embossed upon lower ones as *Elohim*.[151]

"קול המולה (*Qol hamulah*), *A sound of tumult* (ibid.)—called by the name אלוה (*Eloah*). This name is established within the courts below, in the place where merit dwells.[152]

"*Like the sound of a camp* (ibid.)—this is the name upon which Jacob dwells, as is written: *This is the camp of Elohim* (Genesis 32:3).[153]

"Further, regarding this *sound*. They cover a single body, separating this one from that one, to enlighten and join one body here and one body there, as is written: *each had two joining each* (Ezekiel 1:11). Joining *each*—to enlighten, and to distinguish this one from that one. Two others cover their bodies, as is written: *and two covering their bodies* (ibid.).[154]

"They are all engraved and hewn in the letters of the mystery of the holy Name of Forty-Two Letters, beneath two stones, above and below, so that the blessed Holy One will be recognized in His Name and in His Glory, becoming one.[155]

"Forty-eight chariots hidden within them, concealed in the side of *Adam*—who dwells upon the throne, in the mystery of forty-eight letters and two hundred others that are engraved upon their bones, corresponding to the limbs

of the body. They all rule over the throne below, like the number of commandments of the Torah in the mystery of זכור (*zakhor*), *Remember* (Exodus 20:8). That is the image of *Adam*, who took all those commandments [41a] and all those mysteries of limbs of the body, restoring them in their mystery within the holy throne. Through them the throne is raised with another 365 commandments, in the mystery of *Guard* (Deuteronomy 5:12).[156]

"Upper throne draws them all forth from the midst of a single spring, concealed in its obscurity, that rules over it. That spring—no one is aware of it, no one can see it. Of this is written *Hidden from the eyes of all living, concealed from the birds of heaven* (Job 28:21), *no human knows its worth* (ibid., 13).[157]

"It is written: *The throne had six steps* (1 Kings 10:19)—six sides below like the array of six sides above. *Six steps* to the upper throne, *six steps* to the lower throne—these and those are unable to gaze and apprehend the glory of the throne upon them; all the more so regarding the One who rests upon that throne. They all exist in fear and dread beneath the throne; they carry the throne, not knowing where the bodies will be joined. This is as is said: *Each one's wings joined to the other* (Ezekiel 1:9), in order to raise it. Then, all the epithets that veil holy names rule with the names, and the blessed Holy One is called by His epithets.[158]

"When the throne is established enduringly in joy, in its proper place, the living beings *let their wings slacken* (ibid., 24), no longer ruling through those epithets. Then they are joyous because those epithets *slacken*. Then the blessed Holy One is called by other celestial, holy names, as is written: *When they stood still* (ibid.)—at their stations. *When they stood still*—not traveling, rather rejoicing in blissful holiness, and shining with the splendor that they absorb from the throne. Of this is written *they let their*

wings slacken. Then other supernal, holy names of the blessed Holy One rule.[159]

I saw a gleam כעין חשמל (*ke-ein ḥashmal*), *as of amber—what looked like a fire encased in a frame*… (Ezekiel 1:27).[160]

“ואראֵ (*Va-ere*), *I saw*—his fleeting vision vanished. This is why it says וָאֵרֶא (*va-ere*), *I saw*, and it is not written וָאֵרָאֶה (*va-er’eh*), *I saw* (ibid., 1). כעין חשמל (*Ke-ein ḥashmal*), *As of ḥashmal*, and not *ḥashmal*. *As of*—like a glimmering, sparkling color, rising up in its colors. כעין (*Ke-ein*), *As of*—like the עינא (*eina*), eye, that cannot see through looking, but rather closed and open, open and closed. So it is with the *ḥashmal*, for there is a *ḥashmal* that is concealed, utterly unseen other than through a closed-eye vision, for none can withstand it nor comprehend it at all. And there is a *ḥashmal* that stands in its colors amid the sparkling to illuminate, and to be seen momentarily. This is the one below, since regarding the one above it is not written *va-ere*, but rather *va-er’eh*.[161]

“This is the *ḥashmal* that is seen with colors—purple, green, red, and white. One ascends and one descends, sparkling and glimmering, ascending and descending. Consequently, it is written כעין חשמל (*ke-ein ḥashmal*), *color of ḥashmal*, and not *ḥashmal* or *the ḥashmal*, since it is not *ḥashmal*, but rather like its color. Like the colors of its appearance—those are its colors.[162]

“*Ḥashmal*—light grasping light within, the light that is seen in those sparks. Another light—subtle, radiant, teeming with sparkles—abides within. Therefore it does not say here *ḥashmal*, but rather *as of ḥashmal*.[163]

“What is written of the first vision? *Flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it*, and afterward *from within it, like the color of ḥashmal* (ibid., 4). In contrast, here, at first is written *as of ḥashmal*, and afterward *like the appearance of fire encased in a frame*—first, *as of ḥashmal*, then *like the*

appearance of fire. From the middle of the body and upward; and from the middle of the body downward.[164]

"There are three colors here—*ḥashmal* first, then *fire* within it, and then *radiance*. These are mysteries engraved within the holy name: *Adonai* at first, *as of ḥashmal*; afterward, *Elohim, like the appearance of fire in a frame; YHVH* is innermost of all, *a radiance*. All three are engraved within this mystery, integrated as one, unifying completely—this one with that one. Of this, [41b] Ezekiel looked above and looked below within Faith, in supernal mysteries *from the appearance of his loins*… (ibid., 27).[165]

זהר על הפרשות

Zohar al ha-Parashot

ZOHAR ON THE TORAH PORTIONS

PARASHAT NOAḤ פרשת נח

“Noah” (Genesis 6:9–11:32)

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said, “Happy is the portion of Israel, for the blessed Holy One chose them and gave them the holy Torah! He admonished them, cautioning them to protect themselves from those above and below, that no one should be sovereign over them other than the blessed Holy One alone. They know how to stave off all prosecutors and quaestors, to become a portion of His legacy and inheritance. This is as is written: *Indeed, YHVH’s share is His people; Jacob, His allotted possession* (Deuteronomy 32:9).[1]

“Come and see: On Rosh Hashanah, the blessed Holy One sits in judgment upon the world. All of its inhabitants pass before Him for accounting, and there is no one who does not enter for reckoning—the books of the living and the dead are open.[2]

“Since the blessed Holy One favors them, He provided them with advice for protection from diverse species of celestial prosecutors—these are the ones who are appointed whenever judgment looms over the world. On this day, Israel is poised to arouse compassion upon themselves. How? With the shofar, for the sound that issues forth soars above, rousing the celestial shofar. Then mercy is aroused from its abode, and the blessed Holy One rises from the Throne of Judgment—and sits upon the Throne of

Compassion. He has mercy upon Israel, denying the prosecutor authority over them.[3]

"When the people of Israel sit repentantly before the blessed Holy One, they blow the shofar, arousing compassion; the sound going forth is itself the arousal of compassion. As a result, the Denouncer cannot appear before the Throne of Mercy since he does not come from that side—no prosecutor can be found.[4]

"Yom Kippur is the sealing of judgment, when the people of Israel abide in the holiness of their Master. On that day, so that the Denouncer will not approach the Temple, he is given a goat that comes from the side of Impure Spirit. Impure Spirit delights in it, sporting with it, and so does not approach the Temple to profane it. As a result, faces shine and Israel is saved from him.[5]

"At other times, when the sins of humanity abound, when judgment erupts against the sins of the world, then the Denouncer appears before the blessed Holy One, and the Temple is defiled, all faces anguished, and judgment prevails. Of this is said *End of all flesh has come before Me* (Genesis 6:13). *Has come before Me*—actually!—to exact restitution for the sins committed by the world."[6]

Rabbi Yehudah opened, "*Let me know* (Psalms 39:5)…"[7]

Come and see: Whoever performs the commandments of the Torah vigilantly, his soul will be preserved within his body—for it is a תיבה (*teivah*), ark, and he will not be punished, nor will the Angel of Death rule over him. Whoever does not guard nor fulfill the commandments of the Torah, but rather transgresses them, the Angel of Death will rule over him.[8]

Come and see: The ark—this is the body. Noah and his wife—ה י (*YH*). Shem and his wife—ה ו (*VH*). Japheth and his wife—ה י (*YH*). The name is completed—*YHVH* is one—with Ham and his wife; but they are a mere imitation.[9]

This is the meaning of אלהים (*Elohim*), *God, said to Noah* (Genesis 6:13). *Elohim*—this is *Shekhinah*. *"End of all flesh…"* (ibid.).[10]

Make a skylight for the ark (ibid., 16)—mystery of the body.[11]

[*You shall enter the ark,*] *you and your sons…* (ibid., 18)—men and women separately. *Noah did so* (ibid., 22)—holy covenant. *As all that Elohim commanded him* (ibid.)—alluding to *Shekhinah*.[12]

YHVH said to Noah (ibid. 7:1)—attribute of compassion. [*Come into*] *the ark* (ibid.)—this is the body. *For you I have seen* [*as righteous*] (ibid.).[13]

Of every animal that is not pure: one pair, male with its mate (ibid., 2)—from the side of impurity. Of this is said *I will destroy* [*your chariots*] (Micah 5:9). He saw that there were only two, and not seven pairs as is written of the *fowl of the heavens* (Genesis 7:3)—fourteen, male and female *to keep seed alive over the face of the earth* (ibid.). *Two of each came…* (ibid., 9). He looked and saw regarding what was said at first: *Of every animal that is not pure*, and then *two each*.[14]

[21b] Rabbi Yehudah said, "Come and see: There is not a single night in which a soul—called dove—does not depart from a human body. This is as is written: *He sent out the dove* (ibid. 8:8). *Whether the waters had decreased* (ibid.)—these are the raging waters, as is said: *the raging waters* (Psalms 124:5), from the side of impurity. *From the surface of the earth* (Genesis 8:11)—those that are above the earth, angels of destruction.[15]

"What is the meaning of *but the dove found no resting place* (ibid., 9)? She is barred from the heavenly world, from the righteous above, and from all blessings, as is written: *it returned to him to the ark, for there was water over all the earth* (ibid.). He sent her out a second time—*again he sent out the dove from the ark* (ibid., 10)—and on account of distress and strain *the dove came back to him*

toward evening (ibid., 11). Not even a moment's repose shone upon them, compared to previously—the day had darkened upon her and the sun had set.[16]

"What did she say to Noah and his sons? *Then the watchmen found me as they went about the city* (Song of Songs 5:7)—the ones guarding the gates of Jerusalem. But nonetheless *a plucked olive leaf was in its bill* (Genesis 8:11), and on account of this, *Noah knew that the waters had abated* (ibid.), and that the angels of holiness had defeated the angels of destruction. *He waited another seven days… and it did not* [*return to him*] *any more* (ibid., 12) for the waters had abated from the face of the earth.[17]

"After being secreted away, once the sovereignty of the Angel of Death has lapsed, and sinners have passed from the world, what is written? *God remembered Noah* (ibid., 1).[18]

"A ship—in which there are Jews, Ishmaelites, and children of Esau—can be contrasted with Noah's ark. There can be a body comprising them all as well, but such a body does not belong to a holy soul. Thus, it is said of Noah that he is soul of soul, as is written: *Make yourself an ark of gofer wood* (ibid. 6:14).[19]

"This is like what He said to Abram, לֶךְ לְךָ (*Lekh lekha*) *Go you forth, from your land* [*from your birthplace*] (ibid. 12:1). Why two times? The meaning is 'Go you forth from your dwelling place—and from your body.'[20]

"*From the house of your father* (ibid.)—celestial Jerusalem. *To the land that I will show you* (ibid.)—alluding to the body, which is itself Noah's ark.[21]

"This is the pattern with Noah, as is written: *He sent out the dove* (ibid. 8:8). They plucked the dove out from the ark and thrust her into the waters. Following this model, the dove departed from Noah's ark, as is written: *He sent it out, and it went to and fro… and it did not return to him any more* (ibid., 12)."[22]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “When Noah was in the ark, he feared that the blessed Holy One would never remember him. Once sinners of the world were removed, what is written? *God remembered Noah* (ibid., 1).”[23]

PARASHAT LEKH LEKHA פרשת לך לך

“Go You Forth!” (Genesis 12:1–17:27)

[24a] *Pharaoh put men in charge of him, and they escorted him* (Genesis 12:20).[24] Come and see: The blessed Holy One is a shield for the righteous so that others may not rule over them. The blessed Holy One protected Abraham so that none could prevail over him and his wife. Come and see: *Shekhinah* did not waver from Sarah’s side all that night. When Pharaoh approached, an angel appeared and gave him lashes. Every [24b] time that Sarah said to strike, he would strike, while Abraham held steadfast to his Master. For they could not have power over Sarah, as is written: *The righteous are as confident as a young lion* (Proverbs 28:1). This was a trial, but Abraham had no doubt in the blessed Holy One.[25]

Rabbi said, “Come and see: This is why the blessed Holy One did not instruct him to go down to Egypt—rather, he decided himself to go down—so that there would be no opening for people to say that God instructed thus, and then he had trouble on account of his wife.”

Rabbi Isaac opened, “*The righteous will flourish like a palm tree; he will thrive like a cedar in Lebanon* (Psalms 92:13).”[26]

PARASHAT VA-YERA פרשת וירא

“He Appeared” (Genesis 18:1–22:24)

[26b] One time Rabbi Shim’on went out and saw that the world had become dark and gloomy, its light occluded. He said to Rabbi El’azar, “Come, let us see what the blessed Holy One intends to do in the world.”[27]

They went forth and found an angel who resembled a huge mountain, thirty fiery flames streaming from his mouth. Rabbi Shim’on said to him, “What do you intend to do?”

He replied, “I intend to destroy the world because there are not thirty righteous ones in this generation, since this is what the blessed Holy One decreed regarding Abraham. *For Abraham* היו יהיה (*hayo yihyeh*), *will surely be* (Genesis 18:18)—יהיה (*yihyeh*) in *gimatriyyah* equals thirty.”[28]

Rabbi Shim’on said to him, “I beg of you, go before the blessed Holy One and say to Him, ‘Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai exists on earth!’”

The angel came before the blessed Holy One and said to Him, “Master of the Universe, it is revealed before You what Son of Yoḥai said to me.”

The blessed Holy One replied, “Go, destroy the world! Pay no attention to Son of Yoḥai!”

When the angel came back, Rabbi Shim’on saw him and said, “If you do not go, I decree that you will not enter the heavens, but rather you will be in the place of Uzza and Aza’el![29]

“When you enter before the blessed Holy One, say to Him, ‘If there are less than [26c] thirty righteous ones in the world, let twenty suffice, for thus is it written: *I will not do it for the sake of the twenty* (ibid., 31). And if there are not twenty, let ten suffice, for thus is it written: *I will not destroy for the sake of the ten* (ibid., 32). If there are not ten, let two suffice—I and my son, for thus is it written: *By the testimony of two witnesses… shall a* דבר (*davar*), *matter, be established* (Deuteronomy 19:15). *Davar* always signifies the world, as is written: *By the* דבר (*devar*), *word, of YHVH—the heavens*… (Psalms 33:6). And if there are not two, there is

one—and I am he, as is written: *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25).'"[30]

At that point, a voice boomed from the heavens, saying, "Happy is your portion, Rabbi Shim'on, for the blessed Holy One decrees above and you annul below! Of you is said *He performs the will of those who fear Him* (Psalms 145:19).[31]

PARASHAT TOLEDOT פרשת תולדות

"Generations" (Genesis 25:19–28:9)

Esau said to Jacob, 'Let me gulp down some of this red red stuff' (Genesis 25:30). Why is *red* written twice? Since everything associated with him is red, as is said: *The first one came out* אדמוני (*admoni*), *ruddy* (ibid., 25). His food is red, as is written: *some of* האדם האדם הזה (*ha-adom ha-adom ha-zeh*), *this red red stuff*. His land is red, as is written: *in the land of Seir, the steppe of* אדום (*Edom*), *Edom* (ibid. 32:4). His men are red, as is written: *Esau is father of* אדום (*Edom*), *Edom* (ibid. 36:43). The one who is destined to exact restitution from him is red, as is written: *my lover is radiant* ואדום (*ve-adom*), *and ruddy* (Song of Songs 5:10). And His clothing is red, as is written: *Why is your clothing* אדם (*adom*), *red?* (Isaiah 63:2); and *Who is this coming* מאדום (*me-Edom*), *from Edom?* (ibid., 1).[32]

PARASHAT VA-YETSE פרשת ויצא

"He Left" (Genesis 28:10–32:3)

[27d] That Jew opened, saying, *"Jacob took himself rods of fresh poplar, almond, and plane* (Genesis 30:37). *He took himself* (ibid.)—for himself and for his enhancement. *Rods of poplar* (ibid.)—mystery of *vav* of the holy name, also called *Tif'eret*. Jacob united with it, and it has the appearance of a rod. לבנה (*Livneh*), *Poplar*—בן (*ben*), *son*, of upper, concealed ה (*he*).[33]

“*Fresh* [*poplar*]—from the side of water, called *Ḥesed*. *Almond*—from the side that suckles fire, called *Gevurah*. וערמון (*Ve-armon*), *And plane*—from his own side and portion, essence of all colors—for Jacob was shrewd in ערמימותא (*armimuta*), subtlety.[34]

“*He peeled white stripes in them* (ibid.). *In them*? It should say *in it*, since it says מקל (*maqel*), *rod*—just one. What is the meaning of *in them*? All seven rungs alluded to in Scripture—*Yours, O YHVH, are the greatness and the power* (1 Chronicles 29:11)—are consummated through those white stripes, since side of fire was peeled within them, surrounded by the side of water, as is written: *exposing the white of the rods* (Genesis 30:37).[35]

“Come and see: The seven rods are alluded to in the following verses. *Jacob took a rod* (ibid.)—one. *Of the rods* (ibid.)—two, yielding three. *He placed the rods* (ibid., 38)—two, yielding five. *They came to be in heat by the rods* (ibid., 39)—yielding seven. These comprise the mystery of seven voices, and the mystery of *She has hewn her seven pillars* (Proverbs 9:1). These are the seven days of בראשית (*bereshit*), creation, that shine from ראשית (*reshit*), *Beginning*, also called *Ḥokhmah*. These are the seven pillars upon which the blessed Holy One established the world—all in the mystery of the Holy Name.[36]

“Come and see: When this rod was in the hands of consummate Jacob, the Torah called it מקל (*maqel*), *rod*. When it was in the hands of Moses and Aaron, it was called מטה (*matteh*), *staff*, as is written: *Moses took the staff of God in his hand* (Exodus 4:20); and Aaron, too, united with it. What is the difference between this case and that?[37]

“Ah, the explanation is a supernal mystery. When it was held by Jacob, the Torah called it מקל (*mi-qol*), *from voice*—from the side of קל (*qol*), voice, since Jacob is called “Voice.” This is as is written: הקל (*ha-qol*), *the voice, is the voice of Jacob* (Genesis 27:22)—he bonded with the voice, since that is his rung.[38]

“When the rod was held by Moses and Aaron—since they united with *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, two supports—it was called מטה (*matteh*), *staff*, a term signifying support. For through them the world was established upon Torah, having emerged from between two disciples, transmitted through their hands. They are the supports of the world, by means of Torah—which emerges from between *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, which they grasp—called מטה (*matteh*), *staff*. If a person grasps the Torah, the Torah supports and strengthens his own legs, preventing him from straying to the right or to the left. Happy are Israel, for the blessed Holy One gave them the Torah, to reveal supernal secrets to them! Of them is written *You, cleaving to YHVH your God, are alive every one of you today* (Deuteronomy 4:4).[39]

PARASHAT VA-YESHEV פרשת וישב

“He Dwelled” (Genesis 37:1–40:23)

[26c] Come and see:[40] The blessed Holy One created seven celestial days in the world, planting and building worlds upon them, as is written: *Six days YHVH made heaven and earth and on the seventh day He ceased and was refreshed* (Exodus 31:17). It is not written בששת ימים (*be-sheshet yamim*), *in six days*, but rather ששת ימים (*sheshet yamim*), *six days*.[41]

Corresponding to those heavenly days He created seven truly righteous ones on earth—sustaining them and illuminating them, each and every one corresponding to his day. He planted each and every one in the generation that was fitting for him, and they are the patriarchs of the world: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David. They are called mountains, *ancient mountains* (Deuteronomy 33:15), suspended from the seven celestial days that we have mentioned: six days of creation and the seventh that goes before them. This is as is said: *The House of David* [*will be*] *like a divine being—like an angel of YHVH before them* (Zechariah 12:8).[42]

Even though David is the seventh, he is the fourth in days. Joseph is the seventh, but when *Shekhinah* is contained within Joseph, providing him with additional delight from the House of the King, then She too is called seventh.[43]

They all unite with *Shekhinah* in the Mystery of Seven, since She is called בת שבע (*bat sheva*), Daughter of Seven. She is the daughter of Heavenly Mother, encompassing seven supernal rungs that are with Her. She is the rung of Justice—tenth of those ten celestial lights by which the blessed Holy One is called.[44]

She is seventh in the verse *Yours, O YHVH, are the greatness and the power and the beauty and the victory and the splendor—yes, all that is in heaven and on earth; Yours, O YHVH, is kingship* (1 Chronicles 29:11). How can this be, since She is fourth in days! Well, it is because She is the final planting and She is contained within the seventh; this is why She has taken His name.[45]

Each and every one of the earthly patriarchs knew the blessed Holy One through his particular rung, uniting with Him through that rung. Abraham bonded with Him and knew Him through his speculum, namely *Gedullah* (which is *Ḥesed*), right of the King. Through this rung he held fast to Her, never abandoning Her, behaving graciously with humanity. It has been established that his actions ascended up for him through this rung.[46]

Isaac knew Him through the rung of *Gevurah*, called *Terror of Isaac* (Genesis 31:42), fearing Him always. Jacob knew Him through the rung of *Tif'eret*, synthesis of *Ḥesed* and Fear. He is called Truth—and he joined with it, as is written: *You will give truth to Jacob, loving-kindness to Abraham* (Micah 7:20).[47]

Joseph knew [26d] the blessed Holy One through the speculum called כל (*kol*), *all*. This is why Joseph is called כלכל (*Khalkol*), Sustainer, as is written: ויכלכל יוסף (*va-yekhalkel*), *Joseph sustained* (Genesis 47:12), since he is called *Foundation of the World* (Proverbs 10:25).[48]

Moses and Aaron—two cherubim—the supernal voice is heard from between them. This is why the Torah was given through them, as is written: *I will meet with you there and speak with you, from above the covering between the two cherubim that are on top of the ark of the covenant, all that I shall charge you* (Exodus 25:22). They are the two celestial cherubim, called *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*—two supports of the body. Similarly, *Matronita* has two cherubim below, beneath the Sea, suckling from Her.[49]

They are *on top of the ark of the covenant*—truly—the one called Justice, Ark of the Covenant. Who is Covenant? Joseph. Of him is written *A testimony He ordained it in* יהוסף (*Yhosef*), *Joseph* (Psalms 81:6). He is also called Written Torah, and the Ark is called Oral Torah.[50]

Come and see: All the heavenly sons joined above allude to Written Torah, Torah of *YHVH*. David, bonded with *baraita*—Oral Torah—alludes to received tradition. For She receives light of the Written Torah, called Joseph, Righteous One, All, and Foundation—portion of Joseph.[51]

Those two cherubim stand upon the testimony of the ark, as is written: *the victory and the splendor—yes, all that is in heaven and on earth* (1 Chronicles 29:11). This is fulfillment of Heaven, coupling with Earth. And so it is that for everything that the blessed Holy One created above, He created a correspondence below. Joseph is called testimony, as is written: *A testimony He ordained it* ביהוסף (*bi-Yhosef*), *in Joseph*. He is peace—above and below.[52]

Of this we have learned: "ארון (*Aron*), Casket, of Joseph and the ארון (*Aron*), Ark, of *Shekhinah* were traveling together in the desert, and everyone would ask, 'What is the nature of these two arks?' They would respond, 'This one fulfilled that which is written in this one.'" Fulfilled—actually—as is written: *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. For he is the foundation of the world—truly![53]

David came—seventh of the patriarchs—and united with Bathsheba, who is Kingship, never abandoning Her.

This is as is written: *With My servant David as their prince forever* (Ezekiel 37:25); and *his throne like the sun before Me* (Psalms 89:37). All this the Torah has taught us: they are all bonded to *Shekhinah* in the Mystery of Seven.[54]

Come and see: When Abraham—first holy lamp of the world—longed to ascend to his rung, he was unable to until he rose to three supernal rungs above his position. Once he recognized the blessed Holy One through those three—Ancient One, Father, and Mother—from whom a light streams below, then he united with his portion, first light called First Day. All cleave to their rungs from the midst of that speculum that presides above, of which no human being is aware—truly! Of this we have learned: "Abraham recognized his Creator at the age of three years"—three years, precisely![55]

Come and see regarding those three years: Since *Shekhinah* is called Bathsheba, he was unable to cleave to Her until he rose to know Her, to be illuminated, and to shine upon all that is below—with those three supernal rungs and the other seven. Seven and three: these are the ten celestial rungs—mystery of Mother of the blessed Holy One.[56]

Once he was illuminated by those three, he yearned to ascend in seven, as is written: *Abraham set seven ewes of the flock* (Genesis 21:28) apart. He alluded to this mystery to Abimelech—Abraham's descendants would not rule over Abimelech's until seven true righteous ones of Israel would be perfected below, corresponding to rungs [27a] above. Once consummated, the lower world will be like the paradigm of the world above, enduring entirely.[57]

David is the seventh; and he arouses Bathsheba above, for She executes vengeance for Israel, exacting it from [their foes], as is written: *It happened thereafter that David struck down the Philistines and subjugated them, and David took Metheg-Ammah from the hand of the Philistines* (2 Samuel 8:1). What is the meaning of *It happened*

thereafter? Once the people of Israel were perfected, resembling the supernal paradigm, then *David struck down the Philistines and subjugated them*. Before this, the people of Israel were unable to break their strength. And behold, the companions already aroused regarding Metheg-Ammah, and have established it.[58]

Come and see: Abraham alluded to Abimelech with *ewes of the flock* (Genesis 21:28) and not with goats, since the former are from the side of *Ḥesed*, from those angels who suckle from the right side and give suck to the latter below—the ewes serving below their rule. Abraham took hold of his portion—rung of the right, *Ḥesed*, entirely through the rung of *Ḥokhmah*. Of this we have learned that one who dwells among sheep will never be harmed; but if one dwells among goats, countless wardens of Judgment advance to receive him—to dupe him, since they are from the side of Hard Judgment.[59]

But, when Isaac came to establish a covenant with him, he did so through the revelation of *Shekhinah* from that well. This is as is written: *He called it seven* (Genesis 26:33).[60]

Come and see: Abraham called that same well of flowing waters באר שבע (*be'er sheva*), Well of Seven, whereas Isaac called it שבעה (*shiv'ah*), Seven. What is the difference between this one and that? Well, the explanation is that Isaac bonded with his portion, rung of Terror—which is Judgment—and added ה (*he*) to it accordingly, since ה (*he*) always signifies Judgment. Your mnemonic for this is הא (*he*) *is holding you to account* (Ezekiel 16:43). Of this is written *He called it seven*. He did not establish the covenant with sheep as his father had—all executed in the mystery of wisdom—and he added *he* to demonstrate that this was his inheritance.[61]

Come and see: When the blessed Holy One created the world, He established it on Justice. When He saw that it would not endure, He blended it with *Ḥesed*, as is written: *when YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven* (Genesis 2:4). And

they have established that the world endures on account of Abraham.[62]

This is the reason that this well is house of the world, and why it is called Foundation Stone. This is as is written: *therefore the name of the town is Beersheba* (ibid. 26:33); even though it cleaves to Isaac, as is written: *He called it seven* (ibid.). Its name is *Be'er Sheva*, like the well of Abraham, and not *Be'er Shiv'ah*, as is written: *His right hand drew me close* (Song of Songs 8:3).[63]

Come and see: Four of the seven truly righteous—when they longed to draw close to *Shekhinah* through the Mystery of Seven, they all aroused through this well, whose waters never cease. Abraham dug this well—teaching all of humanity to know and worship the blessed Holy One. After he dug the well, waters flowed forth, never ceasing. When Abraham died, what is written? *All* באֵרֹת (*be'erot*), *the wells, that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham, his father*, [*the Philistines blocked up, filling them with earth*] (Genesis 26:15).[64]

It is spelled באֵרַת (*be'erat*), *the well of* (ibid., 18), in the feminine form, and it was just one well, as is written: שבע באֵר (*Be'er Sheva*), Well of Seven. But it is pronounced באֵרוֹת (*be'erot*), *wells*, to indicate that there were many, since the well appeared to the patriarchs wherever they traveled, and it seemed as if there were many wells.[65]

After the Philistines filled the well with earth, the world became desolate, for there were none who knew the blessed Holy One. Upon Isaac's arrival, what is written? *Isaac returned and dug the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father* (ibid.). What is the meaning of *returned*? He restored the world to its proper array, and taught the people of the world to know the blessed Holy One. This is as is written: *After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son. And Isaac dwelled by the well Lahai Roi* (Genesis 25:11).[66]

From whom is She filled? From the One upon whom the lives and existence of all upper and lower beings depend. Seeing all, as is written: *He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him* (Daniel 2:22).[67]

Come and see: Since those servants of Isaac [27b] come from the side of Hard Judgment, once they dug the well, what was written? *Accusation* (Genesis 26:21)—and this has been established. Until he himself came *and dug another well…. he named it 'Expanses'* (ibid., 22)—actually! Since his father's servants had all come from the right side, there had been no accusation at all, and no judgment was emitted through this well to prosecute them when their actions were unfit.[68]

From this same well is an opening for knowing the blessed Holy One, as is written: *Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and praise Yah* (Psalms 118:19).[69]

Before Isaac departed from this world, he blessed Jacob and sent him to Laban to find a mate. When he went to Haran, what is written? *He looked, and here: a well in the field* (Genesis 29:2). Once Jacob saw the glory of the blessed Holy One within that well called Well of Seven, he said to Laban, *I will serve you seven years for Rachel…* (ibid., 18).[70]

[T1 116a][71] Come and see: Even though this well was located in Beersheba, nonetheless, wherever the patriarchs traveled, the Well went with them; and it was with the people of Israel in the desert also. Once Jacob saw that it was traveling with him, what is written? *He looked, and here: a well in the field*, like one who sees something that is his, first here, then there. He longed to couple with *Shekhinah* in the Mystery of Seven, and he said to Laban, *I will serve you seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter*—actually! All in the mystery of wisdom. Then Laban replied, "טוב (*Tov*), *Good, that I give her to you* (ibid., 19)," as is written: *YHVH is good to all* (Psalms 145:9).[72]

When Joseph arrived—Foundation of the World—what was written? *These are the generations of Jacob—Joseph…* (Genesis 37:2). Is Joseph his only descendant? He had many righteous descendants! Ah, the most praiseworthy of all those descendants, pillar of all worlds—who is he? *Joseph*, שבע עשרה (*sheva esrei*), *seventeen, years old* (ibid.)—he bonded with the blessed Holy One more than all the others, bonded below in Mystery of Seven, and bonded above in Mystery of עשר (*eser*), Ten. This is as is written: בן שבע (*ben sheva*), *seven*, first, and then עשרה (*esrei*), *ten*.[73]

He rose from the bottom to the top, and sat at the head of the patriarchs, nourishing them, for it is on account of him that anointing oil flows down from Concealed Brain for the sustenance of all.[74]

He is called Righteous above, as is written: *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25). On his account, all endure in Mystery of Seven below, as is written: *She has hewn her seven pillars* (Proverbs 9:1), and *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. Joseph unites below with Foundation—who is below in Mystery of Seven, and bonded above in Mystery of Ten—soaring upward beyond them all to the top of the brain. This is why in the blessings for Joseph it is written *from the top of the age-old mountains* (Deuteronomy 33:15).[75]

Who sits atop those seven exalted mountains by which the world is maintained? One must say: Joseph, with three truly righteous ones bonded to the *Shekhinah* sitting on his right—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and three on his left; and he dwells at their head, as is written: *from the top of the age-old mountains*. This is so inasmuch as he dwells above them all in Mystery of Ten, where they are spread out—as is written: *seventeen years old*—bonded above and below, sustaining upper ones and lower ones. He is positioned in the middle, like the pattern of the six branches of the lampstand, with the middle branch sustaining them all.[76]

Thus, Righteous One above—called Sabbath—is in the middle like a king, as is written: *Joseph was the governor over the land* (Genesis 42:6)—actually! This is why the Torah begins with his praise, saying *These are the generations of Jacob—Joseph…* (ibid. 37:2).[77]

Who were consummate Jacob's descendants when he dwelled in the supernal land, as is written: *Jacob dwelled in the land of* מגורי אביו (*megurei aviv*), *his father's strife* (ibid., 1)? Even though Joseph was born in Haran, nonetheless he did not ascend to his rung until consummate Jacob was *in the land of* מגורי אביו (*megurei aviv*), *his father's sojournings*—supernal land.[78]

What is the meaning of [*the land of*] *megurei aviv, his father's sojournings*? Well, the explanation is that the attribute of Judgment ruled, having come from the side of his father in the land. Thus one should be fearful lest the attribute of Judgment rule in the world, for consummate Jacob was terrified of his father—actually! For he had not fulfilled the commandment of honoring one's father and mother for twenty-two years while he was in the house of Laban. He was redressed through Joseph for twenty-two years, as is written: *These are the generations of Jacob—Joseph*.[79]

Who is the essence of them all? Pillar of upper ones and lower ones? You must say—Joseph. What is his praise? That he was *seventeen years old* (Genesis 37:2).[80]

Then the Torah asks: What were the actions of Joseph the Righteous? [116b] The Written Torah replies: *He was* רועה (*ro'eh*), *feeding, his brothers—in the flock* (ibid.). This is the mystery of *from there* (ibid. 49:24), as is written: [*from there*,] *he was* רועה (*ro'eh*), *feeding, the Stone of Israel* (ibid.). Truly, he רעי (*re'ei*), favored, and nourished his brothers, sustaining the entire world, as is written: *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25).[81]

He is called *righteous one* because he guarded that covenant—in the mystery of *yod*, principle of ten—and did not insert it in a foreign place. He refused to disavow the heavenly body and to cause contamination through the *wife of whoredom* (Hosea 1:2), wife of Potiphera.[82]

You might ask, 'How did he favor and sustain his brothers in the world?' By means of *the flock*—truly! With daily offerings, sacrificed every day from the flock. Mystery of the matter: *the yearling shepherded his brothers, by means of the flock*—with those *yearling lambs* (Exodus 29:38).[83]

The Oral Torah asks: The blessed Holy One provides for His children with abundant love, revealing celestial secrets to them. This accords with the time that the Temple stood in its perfection, when daily offerings were sacrificed. But after the Temple was destroyed on account of Israel's transgressions, and offerings are not sacrificed, how can He favor them?[84]

Heavenly Torah replies: *He was* נער (*na'ar*), *a youth* (Genesis 37:2)—the one who was king until now. And he was a governor, as is written: *Joseph was the governor over the land* (Genesis 42:6), and *For from a prison-house he came out to be king* (Ecclesiastes 4:14). Now he remains—on account of the sins of Israel—a youth, as is written: נהר (*nahar*), *River, dry up and become parched* (Isaiah 19:5). One who had been a heavenly נהר (*nahar*), river, became inverted as נער (*na'ar*), youth. Of this is written *Woe to you, O land whose king is a youth* (Ecclesiastes 10:16).[85]

When *your king* (ibid.)—once a river and now a youth—goes into exile with the people of Israel, as Righteous One and Assembly of Israel, He tends to the other nations so that Israel will be nourished in their midst. This is as is written: *They made me guardian of the vineyards, but My own vineyard I did not guard* (Song of Songs 1:6). *They made me*—the transgressions of Israel. *Guardian of the vineyards*—the other nations. The ones called *My own*

vineyard, as is written: *For the vineyard of YHVH Tseva'ot is the House of Israel* (Isaiah 5:7)—*I did not guard* fittingly.[86]

Woe to the people of the world when one who had been king was transformed into a youth—supernal river illuminating all, אתנער (*itna'ar*), dissociated, from His supernal nature of Concealed Brain. But in the time to come, Righteous One will return from exile with Assembly of Israel. This has been established, as is written: *those who were lost in the land of Assyria will come* (Isaiah 27:13)—these are Righteous One and Assembly of Israel, for they had lost the overflow that is their portion. Righteous One—as is written: *The righteous one loses* (Isaiah 57:1). Assembly of Israel—as is written: *Why has the land been lost?* (Jeremiah 9:11).[87]

Then the Torah asks: Who caused the cessation of blessings that come to the world by way of Righteous One, who is *Shepherd of Israel* (Psalms 80:2)?

She answers, saying: *Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father* (Genesis 37:2)—it was that bad report, as well as the crime committed by the tribes against that righteous one that interrupted the blessings that come through his hands. Further, this caused them to be exiled from their land by the wicked Esau, and caused the destruction of the Temple.[88]

This is the mystery of Rabbi Akiva and his companions—the ten who were slaughtered by Esau, as has been established. Come and see the glory of the blessed Holy One who, by means of Esau, laid claim for the disgrace of that righteous one—even though Joseph is the accuser against Esau, as has been established.[89]

Who caused these three punishments? It is as is written: *For three transgressions of Israel* (Amos 2:6). Corresponding to these three are three punishments: prevention of blessings, exile, and the destruction of the Temple—all dependent upon each other. Come and see: Three times did they sin against that righteous one. First:

Because they have sold a righteous one for silver (ibid.)—actually! Second: For casting him into a pit and kicking him with their sandals, as is written: [*they have sold*] *the needy for sandals* (ibid.). Third: For stripping off his cloak, as is written: *For garments taken in pledge they skew by every altar* (ibid., 8)—actually![90]

Those *garments*—cloak of comfort, satisfying Matronita—covering the altar—what did these [offenders] do? They disgraced the garments and removed them from the altar. In return, the altar exacted retribution, as is written: [*they*] *drink in the house* [117a] *of their god, wine bought with fines they imposed* (ibid.). The very wine that is called "cup of wrath" and "cup of poison"—that is their punishment.[91]

What comes to them from the *house of their god*? The place called *house of their god* exchanged the preserved wine that they used to drink. Further, they caused a diversion of the light of blessings that comes from the *altar of the burnt offering* (Exodus 30:28), who spreads Her wings upon them like a mother over her children. This is as is written: יטו (*yatu*), *they skew*—truly! This is as is said: *Israel skewed away from him* (Numbers 20:21). *They skew*—truly—regarding that overflow that used to stream on his account. From here we learn that one who prays for judgment causes the cessation of blessings that flow from צדיק (*tsaddiq*), Righteous One, to צדק (*tsedeq*), Justice. This is as is written: *You shall not skew the case* (Exodus 23:6), and *Justice, justice shall you pursue, so that you may live and take hold of the land* (Deuteronomy 16:20).[92]

All other transgressions that have been written regarding the three sins of Israel are not part of the tally of those three, since those offenders did not commit those crimes against that righteous one; rather, only the three that we have mentioned.[93]

Come and see: Until those sins are dissolved in the tears of Israel and until the righteous one who was sold rejoins them, Esau will not be eradicated from the world.

This is as is written: *The house of Jacob will be fire; the house of Joseph, flame…* (Obadiah 1:18)—and a fire without a flame can barely consume. But, once that righteous one rejoins them, it is written *Saviors will climb Mount Zion to execute judgment on Mount Esau…* (Obadiah 1:21). *Saviors*—two—Jacob and Joseph; and *kingdom* (ibid.) couples with them.[94]

Then [Oral] Torah asks, "Perhaps, God forbid, those sins will cause Righteous One to be toppled from His post, where He used to give suck at the beginning, nourishing the world?"[95]

Written Torah replies, "No, truly! For the blessed Holy One did not abandon him but rather loved him more—appointing him governor over the world, to nourish and shepherd it, providing food for Israel as long as they observe the Sabbath. For it was given to them to procure atonement for the sin of profaning supernal Sabbath. The blessed Holy One has mercy on them and provides for them by means of Righteous One, as is written: *Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons…* (Genesis 37:3)."[96]

Heavenly Israel loves Him and remembers Him, never abandoning Him. Why? *For he was the child of the elders* (ibid.)—sitting at the head of all the supernal ancient ones that were in the world, the *ancient mountains* (Deuteronomy 33:15). Regarding their heads it is written: *Abraham was old*, בא בימים (*ba ba-yamim*), *coming into days* (Genesis 24:1)—into those supernal days. Regarding their end—*King David was old, coming into days* (1 Kings 1:1).[97]

Why did the Torah inscribe these two distinctively, above all the other patriarchs, and then tell us that Joseph was superior to them! Well, the explanation is that Abraham was the first; he dug that well whose waters flow into the world—father of them all. David was the king, as is written: *My servant David shall be as their prince for all time* (Ezekiel 37:25), and *His throne like the sun before Me* (Psalms 89:37). Nonetheless, Joseph is more consummate

than all sides: foundation of the entire world—ark of the covenant; and he sits at their head, three at his right and three at his left. And this has been established.[98]

Then, *he made him an ornamented tunic* (Genesis 37:3)—he made a garment for that Righteous One, a cloak of enticement, inducing Matronita to couple as one. Then צדיק (*Tsaddiq*), Righteous One, and צדק (*Tsedeq*), Justice, appear as one—and the whole world rejoices, enraptured. He draws *Tsedeq* near, beneath His wings, heavenly garment of enticement upon Him. Souls burst out into the world on that night—the seventh, the Sabbath—pouring out from between them, as they couple from one Sabbath eve to the next. All in the Mystery of Seven, as we have mentioned.[99]

Moses appeared, joining his portion with *Netsaḥ*, and then bonding with *Shekhinah*. She was revealed to him at that well, as is said: *He sat by the well* (Exodus 2:15) and he united with Her in the Mystery of Seven. This is as is written: *He sat by the well* juxtaposed with *The priest of Midian had seven daughters* (ibid., 16). It is not written *Jethro had*, but rather in relation to the supernal priest who nourishes the world. He had seven children—seven enhancements for the well.[100]

Come and see: It is written: *Who sent the arm of His beauty to the right of Moses* (Isaiah 63:12). Since it says *sent*… [117b] *to the right—Moses*, is Moses on the right side of the king? And afterward it says *arm of His beauty*—does this indicate that he is on the left side of the king? Actually, this verse is a mystery of wisdom, and this is its meaning. *Who sent the arm of His beauty to be at Moses' right*—even though he is one of the Levites, who are from the left side, and he is *the arm of His beauty*, he is the one who bonded his portion to the attribute of *Tif'eret* and suckled from the arm that is called *Gevurah*. This is as is written: *YHVH has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength* (Isaiah 62:8).[101]

We have learned: *by His right hand*—this is Torah, as is said: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2). *The arm of His strength*—this is tefillin, as is said: *YHVH gives strength unto His people* (Psalms 29:11). In this way, the Torah blends Compassion and Judgment—Compassion, *from His right hand*; *a fiery law for them*, Judgment.[102]

This is as we have learned: The curses of Leviticus were uttered by Moses from the mouth of *Gevurah*, the left side. And even though he joined *the arm of His beauty* to his portion, nonetheless [*He*] *sent the arm of His beauty to be at Moses' right*—right thigh, called *Netsaḥ*. This is as is written: *sent*—actually![103]

From here we learn that there is a left that is the right in relation to the lower left. Even though Aaron was one of the priests, who are from the right side, he joined his portion to the attribute of *Hod*. Thus he is called "left" in relation to the upper left since Moses had turned to the right. This is as is written: *and so he, he will be a mouth for you; and you, you will be to him* לאלהים (*le-lohim*), *like a god* (Exodus 4:16).[104]

The priest of Midian had seven daughters and they came and drew water (Exodus 2:16).[105]

The priest of Midian had—as we have established.[106]

Seven daughters—seven royal crowns with which the patriarchs of the world unite in the verse *Yours, O YHVH, are the greatness and the power and the beauty…* (1 Chronicles 29:11).[107]

They came and drew water—those righteous ones drew from the supernal spring, from the same well. This is as is said: *they filled the* רהטים (*rehatim*), *channels* (Exodus 2:16), as well as *and he ran* (Genesis 18:2)—ורהט (*ve-rahat*), and he channeled. These are the angelic messengers through whom blessings come to the world.[108]

Why is all this necessary? *To water their father's flock* (ibid), as is said: *You, My flock—flock of My pasture—are human* (Ezekiel 34:31). This signifies Israel, who are called אדם (*Adam*), *human*.[109]

The shepherds came and drove them off (Exodus 2:17), as is said: *Many shepherds have destroyed My vineyard* (Jeremiah 12:10)—these are the other nations. *Moses rose and saved them* (Exodus 2:17)—this alludes to the Torah that was given through Moses' hands—that is what saved them.[110]

When Israel returned repentantly to their Master, learning Torah, what is written? *They came to Reuel their father* (ibid., 18)—the one who until now had been *priest of Midian*, presiding on the Throne of Judgment over them. When they returned toward him, they discovered that he is רעואל (*Re'uel*), *beloved of God*—רעי בהו (*re'ei behu*), favoring them, having chosen them, and never abandoning them.[111]

Then that old man opened his mouth with heavenly wisdom, asking them, "*Why have you hurried back* היום (*ha-yom*), *today?*" (ibid.). That is to say, "Who caused you to return yearningly, seeking supernal *Ḥesed*—who is called יום (*yom*), *day* (ibid.)?"[112]

What is written after that? *They said, 'An Egyptian man rescued us'* (Exodus 2:19). איש (*Ish*), *A man* (ibid.)—as is said: והאיש (*ve-ha-ish*), *And the man, Moses was very humble* (Numbers 12:3). *Egyptian*—for ה (*he*) took us out of the land of Egypt.[113]

Alternatively, *an Egyptian man*—when we are not engaged with Torah, that man is מצרי (*mitsri*), *Egyptian*, ruling abusively over us. When we return longingly—*rescued us from the hands of the shepherds; and also he drew, drew water for us*.[114]

What is the significance of *also he* דלה דלה (*dalloh dalah*), *drew, drew, water*—twice? Well, the explanation is *drew* above alludes to the mystery of Moses from the mouth of the Almighty; *drew* below, mystery of Moses from his own

essence. This is the attribute of *Netsaḥ*, drawing supernal blessings from above to water them, as is written: *and watered the flock*.[115]

The reason that they were called *seven daughters* (Exodus 2:16) then is that the people of Israel were in exile at the time. But once they were in their own land, they returned to being daughters and sons, as is written: *The children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, ascended* (Judges 1:16). *Ascended*—actually![116]

Happy are Israel, for the blessed Holy One has chosen them, never abandoning them! He bequeathed the Torah to them through the hands of the faithful shepherd, as is written: *Remember the Torah of Moses My servant* (Malachi 3:22)—the Torah protects them when they are in exile. For without the Torah they could not subsist among the other nations. When they return to the Torah, as is written: *Remember the Torah of Moses My servant*—then redemption and the light of blessings are prepared for them. This is as is written: *Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you* (ibid., 23).[117]

Come and see: It is written: *Moses took* עצמות (*atsmot*), *the bones, of Joseph with him* (Exodus 13:19)—[118a] this is Torah, vigor of Joseph, Written Torah.[118]

Aaron appeared, joining his portion to the attribute of *Hod*, as is written: *for glory and for splendor* (Exodus 28:2). Then he bonded with *Shekhinah* through the Mystery of Seven, as is written: *Aaron took My God of Seven, daughter of Amminadab* (ibid. 6:23). This is why the Torah was given by way of Moses and Aaron, for they had joined their portions to the two supernal cherubs—*Netsaḥ* and *Hod*—between whom a voice is heard.[119]

Of this we have learned: The curses of Leviticus were uttered by Moses from the mouth of the Almighty, whereas the curses of Deuteronomy were uttered by Moses' עצמו (*atsmo*), own self. Own self—actually! From that attribute with which he had joined, as they have established.[120]

David appeared and joined with *Shekhinah* in the Mystery of Seven, as is written: *in Hebron he was king for seven years* (1 Kings 2:11). *In Hebron*—bonding with the patriarchs who were in Hebron, forming the upper chariot. Then he married Daughter of Seven, as is said: *Why, this is Daughter of Seven daughter of* אליעם (*Eliam*), *Eliam, wife of Uriah the Hittite* (2 Samuel 11:3). *Why*—this is Daughter of Seven, daughter of אלי (*Eli*), My God, who bequeathed her to His holy עם (*am*), people.[121]

Right side,[122] called *El*, as is written: *YHVH blessed Abraham* בכל (*ba-kol*), *with all* (Genesis 24:1). And we have learned: "He had a daughter whose name was *ba-kol*." She bears his name because he had protected this well; of this is written *For I have known him, so that he will instruct…* (Genesis 18:19).[123]

Come and see: This rung is called *guard* (Deuteronomy 5:12) and is called *way of YHVH* (Genesis 18:19). When Israel acts with *righteousness and justice* (ibid.), they guard the betrothed one so that the impure, foreskinned one cannot encroach upon Her.[124]

This is why *it was David's practice to mete out true justice to all his people* (2 Samuel 8:15), to guard that celestial path. Since he guarded it—*Joab… was over the army* (ibid., 16)—She waged battles against the nations, and all powers of the king were given into Her hands.[125]

The mystery behind Bathsheba's being given to Uriah before David, and the mystery of the Holy Land's being given to Canaan [before Israel]: both are equal on the scale, as has been established. And if not for David's eating unripe fruit, sovereignty would never have ceased from Israel, since it is only right that earthly kingship should be patterned after heavenly kingship.[126]

Nonetheless, once he repented before his Master, the son whom Bathsheba birthed was Solomon, and he ascended above, as is written: *Solomon sat on the throne as king* (1 Chronicles 29:23). Of this we have learned: "In the

days of King Solomon, the moon assumed fullness," and this has been established.[127]

And it is all one, all those ten.[128]

Joseph dreamed a dream and told it to his brothers (Genesis 37:5). Rabbi opened, saying, "*The name of YHVH is a tower of strength…* (Proverbs 18:10). How resolutely should people ply Torah, Tree of Life! For whoever attains it acquires all possible benefits. Not only this, but he unites with the name of the King, and adheres to it, for Torah is the name of the blessed Holy One.[129]

"Come and see: Joseph the righteous one united with the Torah called Written Torah—more than any of his brothers. Of this we have learned that everything that Jacob learned from Eber he transmitted to Joseph, since the latter was the *child of his old age* (Genesis 37:3). Once the blessed Holy One saw this righteous one's yearning to cleave to goodness, and to ascend to his rung, He aroused for him the Mystery of Dreams.[130]

"Why is it called חילמא (*ḥeilma*), a dream? Because a person has dream-vision only when he is בחלימותא (*be-ḥalimuta*), hale, and his soul is at the height of vigor.[131]

"When his soul rose upward, he saw the rung—in a mystery from Scripture—to which he was destined to cleave: *Look, we were* מאלמים אלומים (*me'allemim alummim*), *binding sheaves* (ibid., 7). This alludes to power—כל דאלים (*kol de-alim*), whoever is stronger, prevails. And where do we cleave? *In the field* (ibid.)—deeper, deeper.[132]

"*Look, my sheaf arose and actually stood up* (ibid.)—in the mystery of his unification with a rung higher than the rest, as is written: *The name of YHVH is a tower of strength…* (Proverbs 18:10). Consequently, *arose*—actually!—in the mystery of *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25), [118b] standing in support of the world.

And actually stood up. And actually—to encompass Assembly of Israel, as is written: *stood up*. Mystery of lower *he*—not separating from that rung, but rather suckling from it.[133]

"*Look, your sheaves gathered around* (Genesis 37:7). All twelve tribes—including Manasseh and Ephraim—surround and stand beneath the Sea of Lower *Ḥokhmah*, as is written: *standing upon twelve oxen: three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east, with the sea set upon them above* (1 Kings 7:25). Mystery of lower *he*, who is arrayed above the tribes and is called *sea*. This is as is written: *All the streams flow into the sea* (Ecclesiastes 1:7)—since this כל (*kol*), *All*, cleaved to Her initially, followed by the other supernal rungs, the six days of *bereshit*, beginning, who suckle from Upper *Reshit*, Beginning, also called Upper *Ḥokhmah*.[134]

"Corresponding to this mystery they stand, encircling the Dwelling—*every man by his banner, with insignia* (Numbers 2:2). This is why it is written *The banner of the camp of Ephraim* (ibid., 18), and not *of Joseph*, since he is above, united with that *tower of strength* (Proverbs 18:10). Hence [*they*] *bowed down to my sheaf* (Genesis 37:7)—my rung.[135]

"Come and see. It is written: *Will you really reign over us* (ibid., 8)—in the mystery of your supernal rung? *Will you really rule us* (ibid.)—in the lower mystery? Consequently, *they hated him even more for his dreams* (ibid.)—in the mystery of sovereignty above, *and for his words*, in the mystery of sovereignty below. This is as is written: *Joseph was the governor over the land; he was the provider to all the people of the land* (ibid. 42:6). He was provided for at first, as is written: *The eyes of* כל אליך ישברו (*kol eleikha yesabberu*), *all look in hope to You* (Psalms 145:15), and afterward המשביר (*ha-mashbir*), *the provider, to all the people of the land*. This is as is written: *You give them their food in its time* (ibid.). What is the meaning of בעתו (*be-itto*), *in its*

time? The meaning is *in his time*—actually!—of that Righteous One, from his rung, from which all beneficence flows to the world.[136]

"Come and see: It is written: *He dreamed another dream* (Genesis 37:9)—in the mystery of sovereignty below, for he ruled over them. Once they saw this, they were jealous of him.[137]

"Come and see: What is written? *His brothers went* לרעות את צאן אביהם (*lir'ot et tson avihem*), *to graze their father's flock, at Shechem* (Genesis 37:12). What is the meaning of *et*? This is the principle of Torah. [They were supposed to go] to Shechem to teach—for this is their portion, that the blessed Holy One had given them in this world, to teach its ways and to ascend above. But they neither taught nor fulfilled it fittingly. This is why את (*et*) is dotted.[138]

"Then the old man said to the righteous one: [*Israel said to Joseph*,] *Aren't your brothers pasturing at Shechem?* (ibid., 13)—they are plying Torah. *Come, I will send you to them* (ibid.)—to be embellished among them. Then [*he said*] *to him, 'Here I am'* (ibid.). Even though he knew that they hated him, he did not avoid fulfilling his father's charge.[139]

"When Gabriel found him wandering in that field, [Joseph] had imagined in his heart that his brothers were upstanding in the everlasting covenant, refining the field upon its supports. However, they were not doing so. Instead, they had traveled to some other place, unfit for cleaving. As a result, he too went there, displaced from that field. He pursued them, to bring them back with ardor to the field—so that they would not deviate from the path of Torah, and would inherit the legacy of the field in its fullness, fittingly.[140]

"He went forth and found that they were dwelling *in Dothan* (ibid., 17). Come and see: *Dothan*—a place of Hard Judgment, so called because they were immersed in

conspiratorial proceedings against that righteous one, to depose him from his station. Then, *They saw him from afar* (ibid., 18)—they had deviated from the holy path to which the righteous one cleaved, the path of life.[141]

"*They conspired against him to kill him* (ibid.). A poor person is considered dead. Why? Because he is lacking כל (*kol*), All. This is why they wanted to depose him from his station. For he is called *Kol*, providing luminous overflow to the land of Israel—his cleaving is through it alone. They sought to dislodge him from it [and to stave off all heavenly beneficence from it].[142]

"Then [Simeon] and Levi [were aroused]—they [119a] derive from the side of Judgment to bar and separate him from the *well of living waters* (ibid. 26:19), holy spring to which he cleaved. They wished to send him to a place of impurity, portion of the other nations that derive from the side of impurity. This is as is written: *Let's fling him into one of the pits* (ibid. 37:20)—portion of the other nations.[143]

"Come and see. It is written: *It happened when Joseph came to his brothers that they stripped Joseph* (ibid., 23). They stripped off the aid provided to him from above, tunic of פיוסים (*piyyusim*), consolation, to give succor to Matronita and to cleave to Assembly of Israel. This is as is written: *his tunic* (ibid.)—his portion and his inheritance.[144]

"*The ornamented tunic that he had on him* (ibid.)—sheltering him with Her wings from above.

"Once they had dislodged the righteous one from his place, they made room for the Impure Side to rule the world. This is as is written: *They slaughtered a goat* (ibid., 31)—this is the one who comes from the side of Judgment, side of Esau. Then the Moon was eclipsed in exile, as is written: *they dipped the tunic in the blood* (ibid.)—tainting the site of the Temple, granting permission to the serpent to govern the world.[145]

"Then the world was degraded incalculably. This is as is written: *They took him and threw him into the pit; and the*

pit was empty—there was no water in it (ibid., 24)—no overflow of *Ḥesed* there since it had become a place of defilement. But there were snakes and scorpions in it, casting [the Jewish people] into exile, as is written: [*I will send against you*] *serpents, adders that cannot be charmed…* (Jeremiah 8:17). This occurred because you defiled the Temple that had been a celestial support for you, and you cleaved to alien worship.[146]

"Then, מדינים (*midyanim*), *Midianite, merchantmen passed by and pulled* [*Joseph up out of the pit*]… (Genesis 37:28). מדינים (*Mi-dinim*), *From judgments*, merchantmen passed by—coming from the side of *wife of Midianites and a house of riffraff* (Proverbs 21:9). סחרים (*Soḥarim*), *Merchants* (Genesis 37:28)—סחרין (*soḥarin*), surrounding, and circling the side of Hard Judgment.[147]

"*They pulled Joseph up out of the pit and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites… and they brought Joseph to Egypt* (ibid.)—place of governance of the other nations, the domain of exile. But nonetheless, the assistance of the blessed Holy One was never withheld from him—from that righteous one—as is written: *YHVH was with Joseph* (ibid. 39:21). Come and see: It is written of the mystery of faith *YHVH is good to all, and His compassion is over all His creatures* (Psalms 145:9)."[148] [*ZḤ* 27b][149]

Corresponding to those seven righteous ones, the blessed Holy One commanded a Musaf offering seven times a year—to add delight and delicacies from the house of the King—so that fathers would be sated first and then sons. These seven and no more.[150]

On the Sabbath—corresponding to *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25). He is called *Kol* and Sabbath, adding delights for him from the Concealed Brain.[151]

On the New Moon—corresponding to Assembly of Israel, called Moon.[152]

On the fifteenth day of the first month—corresponding to patriarch Abraham, who united with the attribute of *Ḥesed*, and is called First.[153]

On the convocation in the third month, when the Torah was given with seven voices—corresponding to Jacob, third of the patriarchs. He united with *the voice is the voice of Jacob* (Genesis 27:22).[154]

On Rosh Hashanah—corresponding to Isaac, who was born that day—on which we remember the binding of Isaac. It is the Day of Judgment, corresponding to the attribute of Judgment with which he was united.[155]

On Yom Kippur—corresponding to Moses. For the blessed Holy One accepted his prayer on that day and had compassion upon Israel; and He also restored the tablets of the Torah to him.[156]

On Sukkot—corresponding to Aaron. In his merit seven clouds journeyed, sheltering Israel like *sukkot*, booths—this is the reason they build *sukkot*, booths.[157]

Throughout the Torah—how many heavenly mysteries are hidden within it! When blessing is added to these seven, the entire world abides in abundant harmony! [29a][158]

That Jew opened, saying, "*As for me, nearness to God is good…* (Psalms 73:28). Come and see: When a person draws near to Torah—which is called 'good,' as is written: *Good for me is the Torah of Your mouth* (ibid. 119:72)—he draws near to the blessed Holy One, who is called 'Good,' as is written: *YHVH is good to all* (ibid. 145:9). Thus he begins to become worthy, as is said: *Say of the righteous one that he is good* (Isaiah 3:10). Upon becoming worthy, *Shekhinah* rests upon him, teaching him celestial mysteries of Torah, since *Shekhinah* couples only with the good, and Righteous One and Righteousness proceed as one.[159]

"Come and see: When the blessed Holy One created the world, He established it, setting it upon [29b] six supernal days—and the seventh, which is above them. For it is

through the seventh—called Righteous One—that upper and lower beings are nourished. They stand upon Him, are supported by Him, and He is their foundation and root. This is as is written: *The eyes of* כל (*Kol*), *all, look in hope to You* (Psalms 145:15)—to that supernal anointing oil, streaming from Brain, most concealed of all, to *Kol*, All. As a result, *You give them their food in his time* (ibid.), since *Kol* arouses toward כלה (*Kallah*), Bride, called Assembly of Israel. This manifests as His compassion upon the world, all worlds rejoicing in delight.[160]

"What is written afterward? *Opening Your hand* [*and sating* לכל (*le-khol*), *all living things, to their pleasure*] (ibid., 16). This is Will of Wills, descending from Concealed Brain to this *Kol*. Once *Kol* has been blessed, all worlds are blessed, as is written: *Righteous is YHVH* בכל (*be-khol*), *in all, His ways.... YHVH is near* לכל (*le-khol*), *to all, who call Him.... He performs the will of those who fear Him* (Psalms 145:17–19).[161]

"Just as He created the supernal world in the mystery of His holy name, so too did He create the lower world with six truly righteous ones, plus another—the seventh. This is as is written: *One against the other God has set* (Ecclesiastes 7:14).[162]

"When sins incited—dislodging this *Kol* (called Righteous One) from His place, as is written: *because they have sold a righteous one for silver* (Amos 2:6)—the blessed Holy One proclaimed, 'I decree that the lower world shall be like the upper world: Righteous One will rule over the land; and all people of the world will be blessed through him.' This is as is written: *A fruitful bough is Joseph* (Genesis 49:22)—none of the limbs of the body are fruitful other than *Righteous One, Foundation of the World* (Proverbs 10:2).[163]

"*A fruitful bough by* עין (*ayin*), *a spring* (Genesis 49:22). Just as the עין (*ayin*), source, of the eyeball sustains the eyeball, and the eyeball cannot exist without its בת עין (*bat ayin*), pupil, so too is Joseph like the עין (*ayin*), source, for all those six who surround Him. Three on his right, and three

on his left; and he sustains them. So it is for the entire world, for the world cannot exist without those six—and the seventh that stands above them.[164]

"The blessed Holy One proclaimed of Righteous One with the mystery of Sabbath, resting upon it and infusing it with all blessings, in order to bless all the other days. This is as is written: *He rested on the seventh day. Therefore YHVH blessed* [*the Sabbath day*] (Exodus 20:11). Who is *Sabbath*? Righteous One.[165]

"The blessed Holy One said, 'You profaned the Sabbath. I decreed that it would be king over all other days, but you turned him into a slave of slaves. Consequently, you too will suffer hard labor.'[166]

"Come and see: How many years did that righteous one dwell without seeing his father? Twenty-two years. Consequently, they dwelt in the land of Egypt for twenty-two years for each of the ten tribes who sold him, yielding two hundred and twenty, minus the ten years deducted from above—on account of the holy leaders of the ten tribes who died there in Egypt. Two hundred and ten remain, as is written: רדו (*Redu*), *Two hundred and ten, there* (Genesis 42:2).[167]

"Jacob said to them, 'I beg of you, go down into exile and deduct those sins, so that the world will not be devastated by famine. For there is no one meritorious below through whom the blessed Holy One will nourish other than the one you sold.' This is as is written: *Opening Your hands* [*and satisfying the desire le-khol, of all, living things*] (Psalms 145:16). It proceeds to explain: Who is *Kol?* Righteous One, as is said: *Righteous is YHVH* [*be-khol, in all, His ways*]… (ibid., 17). Likewise below—by means of the righteous one, salvation will come to the world during seven years of famine. Since they obstructed blessings from the seven upper rungs, rungs of *Sitra Aḥra* were aroused against them—on account of their sins.[168]

“When consummate Jacob descended to Egypt—he and all the tribes—he saw the lower world arrayed like the world above; by the agency of the righteous one, the world was nourished. This is as is written: *he was the provider to all the people of the land* (Genesis 42:6). What is the meaning of משביר (*mashbir*), *provider*? Well, it means that he is the primordial recipient from the celestial world, as is written: *The eyes of* כל (*kol*), *all*, ישברו (*yesabberu*), *look in hope, to You* (Psalms 145:15), and then he provides for the lower world.[169]

“How do we know that Joseph is called כל (*Kol*), All? [29c] We have learned, ‘*Khalkol*—this is Joseph, as is written: ויכלכל (*va-ykhalkel*), *and* [*Joseph*] *sustained* (Genesis 47:12); and it is written: *From there feeds the Stone of Israel* (ibid. 49:24).’[170]

“Once Jacob saw that all seven supernal rungs concurred that there should be a famine in the world on account of the sin performed by his sons—ousting that righteous one from the holy land—he prayed to the blessed Holy One. The blessed Holy One deducted five years, since Jacob is on the fifth rung of supernal days, counting upward from below. However, as to the two that his forefathers grasp, he lacked permission to annul.[171]

“Joseph the righteous one acted similarly. This is as is written: *From the pick of his brothers he took five men…* (Genesis 47:2)—Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, and Benjamin; for they did not detest him, as is written: *he was a youth with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah* (ibid. 37:2). He said, ‘You are fit to stand in the rupture that was rent by your brothers.’[172]

“What is the meaning of *before* פרעה (*par’oh*), *Pharaoh* (ibid. 47:2)? This is the heavenly court that is established לאתפרעא (*le’itpar’a*), to exact justice, for the sins of the world. When those days were paid for the debt imposed upon them, the blessed Holy One was aroused with abundant compassion for them—acting with Judgment against those

who had enslaved them—and He removed them from there.[173]

"When they arrived in Marah, Judgment arose from the left side before the blessed Holy One, saying, 'How can Israel leave the exile? After all, it is written in the Celestial Torah—concealed for two thousand years before the creation of the world—that they should suffer sevenfold for their sins on account of the mighty rupture they caused by sinning against that holy righteous one.' He replied, 'They have a teaching in the holy Torah, a wondrous gift—"Sabbath" is Her name. If they keep Her, He stands there, closing up the rupture that they rent, for Righteous One grasps Her; and She is fit to atone for that transgression.' This is as is written: *He cried out to* YHVH (Exodus 15:25). Who *cried out*? Attribute of Judgment, who is appointed to cry out for justice before Him.[174]

"YHVH *showed him a tree* (ibid.)—this is the Torah, as is written: *A tree of life is she to those who grasp her* (Proverbs 3:18). *He threw it into the waters* (Exodus 15:25)—raging waters, standing ready to exact judgment from them. Then, *the waters turned sweet* (ibid.)—aromatized, truly—for they beheld the powerful remedy for that sin.[175]

"How do we know that they received the commandment at Marah? It is written: *Guard the Sabbath day to keep it holy…* (Deuteronomy 5:12). The blessed Holy One said to them, 'If you guard this heavenly seventh, Attribute of Justice will lack permission to prosecute, as is written: *There He set him statute and law* (Exodus 15:25).' Of this we have learned: She may have compassion upon us and the blessed Holy One will gather us from our exile. If only Israel would keep two Sabbaths in accordance with their *halakhot*, they would be redeemed immediately.[176]

"Come and see what happened when sins incited, and the Sabbath was not guarded fittingly. This occurred when the prophet cautioned them, as is written: *Thus said YHVH, 'Be cautious with your souls! Do not carry burdens on the*

Sabbath day, bringing them through the gates of Jerusalem’ (Jeremiah 17:21). What is the meaning of *do not carry burdens*? Do not bear the burden of Sabbath transgression upon you, for carrying a load is a primordial sin. Sabbath’s dwelling place is none other than the Gates of Heavenly Jerusalem, called Gates of Righteousness; and She is מהכל הכלה הכלולה (*ha-kallah ha-kelulah me-ha-kol*), Bride who comprises All.[177]

“If you guard the Sabbath, She will be strengthened by the earthly kingdom, Kingdom of David, since David is joined to Her. Thus David said, *Yours, O YHVH*, is הממלכה (*ha-mamlekhah*), *kingdom* (1 Chronicles 29:11)—not saying מלוכה (*melukhah*), *kingdom*—thereby integrating his kingdom with the heavenly kingdom. But if you do not keep the Sabbath, [29d] *I will set fire to its gates; it shall consume the fortresses of Jerusalem* (Jeremiah 17:27) below.[178]

“Come and see [what happened] when the *sword avenging with vengeance of the covenant* (Leviticus 26:25) was aroused, when they did not safeguard the holy covenant—in three different modes, but all on the same rung. One: regarding the righteous one that they sold—who was united with the covenant, guarding it, and on that account was called ‘righteous one.’ Two: *Holy flesh they have caused to pass away from you* (Jeremiah 11:15). Three: on account of the Sabbath that they profaned.[179]

“Then, *For three transgressions of Israel… because they have sold a righteous one for silver* (Amos 2:6), it was decreed that they should be outside the Holy Land for seventy years—ten for each day. At the conclusion of seventy years, the blessed Holy One removed them from there; and they came to the Holy Land, abiding there for four hundred and twenty years, on the strength of their plying Torah and its commandments, fittingly.[180]

“When those years were complete, the sin of wanton hatred incited; and hoary, wanton hatred was reawakened. This is as is written: *they hated him* (Genesis 37:4)—

alluding to that righteous one. Consequently, the blessed Holy One delivered them into the hand of one who reviled them with wanton hatred—Esau—as is written: *Because you harbored an ancient hatred and delivered the house of Israel over to the sword* (Ezekiel 35:5).[181]

"The number of years that were missing from the mystery of *sevenfold for your sins* (Leviticus 26:18) were exacted from them by means of the angel of Esau. Come and see: When you calculate twenty-two years sevenfold, for each of those ten who sold him, the sum is 1,540…[182]

"Redemption will be aroused for Israel like the dawn that begins to shine bit by bit, for the thirty years of the righteous one's ascent, corresponding to those thirty supernal rungs. This is as is written: *Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh* (Genesis 41:46). Then he was fit to stand in the breach before Attribute of Judgment *—and the house of Jacob will be fire, the house of Joseph flame* (Obadiah 1:18). At that time, the blessed Holy One will arouse innumerable benefits upon Israel, exacting compensation for the humiliation of Israel and the humiliation of the Torah, inflicted by the enemies, against those who were martyred in the sanctification of His name.[183]

"Come and see that this is the case. We have learned: On the seventeenth of Tammuz the daily offering ceased, and on the ninth of Av the Temple was destroyed. This is as was said by Rabbi Yose: 'A meritorious matter is brought about on an auspicious day, and a deleterious matter on an inauspicious day,' for it was on that very day that they uttered an evil report about the Holy Land. Come and see: on that night of the ninth of Av, they wept futile tears; and weeping was established on that day for generations upon generations.[184]

"Examine carefully and you will find that once the daily offering—which atoned for their sins until the destruction of the Temple, both first and second time—ceased, twenty-two

days elapsed, corresponding to the twenty-two years that the righteous one did not see the glorious face of his father.[185]

"Behold, the companions have aroused that the Temple was destroyed at the conclusion of the Sabbath and at the conclusion of the Seventh Year. It was during the priestly watch of Jehoiarib, while the Levites were standing on their platform and singing the song: *They band together against the just man's life… But YHVH became my fortress… He will turn back against them their wickedness*… (Psalms 94:21–23). They did not manage to conclude the phrase *YHVH will annihilate them* (ibid., 23) before the Gentiles came and conquered them—had they uttered it, nothing could have helped those Gentiles.[186]

"'Conclusion of the Sabbath'—profound wisdom alluded to here! For they had departed from the Sabbath, which healed their afflictions. 'Conclusion of the Seventh Year'—for they had sinned against Assembly of Israel. Not only this, but they had also departed from circumcision, neglecting the holy flesh. 'The priestly watch of יהויריב (*Yehoyariv*), Jehoiarib,' as is said: *Still* אריב (*ariv*), *I will accuse, you—declares YHVH; and* אריב (*ariv*), *I will accuse, your children's children!* (Jeremiah 2:9).[187]

"Then the blessed Holy One was poised to take them out of exile, as is written: *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king is coming to you: righteous and having salvation is he* (Zechariah 9:9).[188]

"You might ask, 'Why does the Messiah come from Judah? He should come from Joseph!' Well, the explanation is that both will come. Since the blessed Holy One does not withhold reward due to any creature, he bestowed kingship upon David because he was the tenth of the righteous, and seventh of the brothers. In this way, kingship on earth is like kingship of the heavens.[189]

[30a] Why did Joshua wage war and not Moses or someone else from among the people? Well, the explanation is that Amalek attacked them on account of their transgression of the Sabbath, as was aroused by the sages of blessed memory: If only Israel had observed that first Sabbath, no people or tongue could have ruled over them. What is written? *It happened on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather and they found nothing* (Exodus 16:27); and it is written: *Amalek came* (ibid. 17:8).[190]

Come and see: The mystery of the matter is that the blessed Holy One commanded Israel at Marah regarding the Sabbath when the Attribute of Judgment was coming to prosecute regarding the transgression of selling the righteous one—who signifies the Sabbath—whom they had cast into the dust. The blessed Holy One said, “There is a remedy for this sin, if they observe the Sabbath—corresponding to Righteous One, Vitality of the Worlds.” This is as is written: *YHVH showed him a tree* (ibid. 15:25), Tree of Life—signifying that they should observe the Sabbath, but they profaned it. Then, *Amalek came*.[191]

At that moment, Moses charged Joshua, “Go wage war against Amalek. It is fitting for you since you are a descendant of that righteous one, and this one [Amalek] has attacked us on account of that sin. If there is no prosecutor against Amalek from among the portion and descendants of that righteous one, no one will be able to defeat him!” Then Joshua acted as instructed by Moses.[192]

Come and see: On account of that sin they were attacked. Joshua spoke to those behind the cloud and exacted holy circumcision from them, hurling it upward. If they had not sinned against Joseph, Joshua would not have had permission, nor assistance from on high to act thus; but he did so in order to show them and instruct them about

the sin that they had perpetrated against the righteous one who had guarded the covenant. Now they profaned the Sabbath that corresponds to him; and the Sabbath exists to defend them against the Attribute of Justice.[193]

Come and see: It is written *They journeyed from Marah and came to Elim; and at Elim there were twelve springs of water* [*and seventy palm trees, and they camped there*] (Numbers 33:9). What is the meaning of אלימה (*Elimah*), *to Elim*? It means nothing less than that they returned to worship of the blessed Holy One, accepting His words wholeheartedly—thus, אלי מה (*Eli Mah*), *'What' is My God*. It has been established that this place was exalted for its water more than any other place in the world, for Written Torah is there, along with twelve springs and seventy palms—all in the Mystery of Faith. All seventy members of the Sanhedrin are nourished and blessed from those supernal, fragrant waters. Happy is the one who merits those waters and is blessed by them! Holy ones of Israel dwelled there, joining the supernal waters with the twelve lower springs.[194]

If at first they corrupted matters, sinning against that Righteous One, now they joined him to His place; and through his hands the world was nourished. Those twelve correspond to twelve palms, nourished from that palm—*Your stature was like a palm tree* (Song of Songs 7:8). Those twelve springs correspond to the twelve tribes that encircle that holy place. Israel was studying assiduously the Torah that they learned from Marah. This one bonded with them; and the crooked serpent that had embittered those waters separated from that well. What had incited him? The sins until that time.[195]

But now they had returned in *teshuvah* to their Master; and the blessed Holy One taught them the ways of the Tree of Life. This is as is written: *YHVH showed him a tree* (Exodus 15:25)—this is Written Torah. *And he threw it into the water* (ibid.)—Oral Torah.[196]

What is the meaning of וישלך (*va-yashlekh*), *and he threw it*? The meaning is יש לך (*yesh lakh*). *Yesh*—World that is Coming, as is written: *So I may endow my lovers with* יש (*yesh*), *substance* (Proverbs 8:21). *Lakh*—Supernal Mother, fifty gates that cleave to it. Then, the waters were aromatized and heavenly dew trickled down from Holy Ancient One, filling the Field of Apples.[197]

What caused all this? אלי מה (*Eli Mah*), *'What' is My God*—the repentant return of Israel to their Master. Then they had permission to settle by those waters, [30b] as is written: *and they encamped there by the water* (Exodus 15:27). What is the meaning of *they encamped* שם (*sham*), *there*? Ah, it means nothing less than that סמא (*sama*), elixir, of life that abides within those waters—consequently, שם (*sam*), *elixir, by the water*.[198]

It has been taught in a *baraita*: "Rabbi Yose said, 'The staff was engraved on two sides with the holy name—one side was Compassion and Judgment in engraved letters. The other side was Judgment within Judgment—*snake on a rock* (Proverbs 30:19).'"[199]

Come and see: It is written: *As for you, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea* [*and split it*]... (Exodus 14:16). What is the meaning of ונטה (*u-nteh*), *and stretch out*? It means: incline it with the side engraved with Compassion and Judgment. It is written: *And Moses turned his hand* (ibid., 21), not *and he reached out his hand*—that is, he inclined it, from one side.[200]

Now, if you say *snake on a rock* was already engraved upon it, actually it was engraved at the bush, as is written: *He flung it on the ground and it became a snake* (ibid. 4:3)—at that very moment, *snake on a rock* was engraved.[201]

Come and see: Rabbi Yehudah said, "The blessed Holy One wanted His names engraved upon the staff to perform the signs. It has been taught in a *baraita*: Two signs were performed at the sea. With the side of Compassion and

Judgment that Moses inclined, he rent the sea for Israel into twelve paths, and with Judgment turned the water upon the Egyptians, drowning them in the depth. This is as is written: *YHVH turned the waters of the sea back upon them* (ibid. 15:19).[202]

"From that time on, he wanted to extract water. The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Turn the stick from the other side, and two signs will be performed with it just as was done with the other side—one sign here, and another at Meribah. Now, *you shall strike the rock* (Exodus 17:6). What is the meaning of *rock*? That very *rock*; and the *snake* withdrew until another time.'"[203]

Rabbi El'azar said, "What is the meaning of *Take the staff and assemble the community, you and Aaron your brother, and you shall speak* [*to the rock*] (Numbers 20:8)?" What is the meaning of *and you shall speak*? Rabbi El'azar explained, "He commanded him regarding *a snake on*, since that had been enacted on the *rock*, but now it was necessary that a snake be fashioned to complete the names of the blessed Holy One with these signs.[204]

"This is derived from *you shall speak*. It is also written *the people spoke against God and against Moses* (Numbers 21:5). What is written afterward? *And YHVH sent against the people the fiery serpents* (ibid., 6). Just as the power of the snake is in its mouth, here, too, in the mouth. But Moses did not perform accordingly; rather, *he struck* (ibid. 20:11). He struck—and the name remained incomplete. Instead, it returned to its former state with the name *rock*, neglecting the snake. This is as is written: *and he struck* (ibid.); and it is not written *and he spoke*, as he had been commanded: *and you shall speak to the rock*.[205]

"This is as we have learned—*rock* is for making, and the serpent is for speaking. It is also written, *He struck the rock with his staff twice* (Numbers 20:11)—once in the past and once now.[206]

"We have learned in a *baraita* that the name remained incomplete at that time—it was not consummated through that sign. For Moses neglected the snake, and the full name was not completed. On one side—completed at the sea; on the other side—he began with the rock but did not complete it with the snake. The blessed Holy One said to him, 'You started with My name but it was not fully actualized through performing the wonders. Thus you too have commenced, but you will not be perfected—*Therefore you will not bring* (ibid., 12). You began to bring them out, but you will not finish bringing them into the land—*therefore you will not bring*.'"[207]

Rabbi El'azar said, "Moses knew in his heart at first, for he trembled when he saw the serpent, as is written: *And Moses fled from it* (Exodus 4:3). His heart saw, but he did not understand."[208]

Rabbi El'azar said, "It is written: *Moses made a serpent of bronze and applied it to the miracle* (Numbers 21:9). It is not written *to* נס (*nes*), *a miracle*, but rather *to* הנס (*ha-nes*), *the miracle*—he wanted to fix that which was lacking. The blessed Holy One said to him, "[*Since you rebelled against My word*…] *to sanctify me through the water* (ibid. 27:14)." With water, and with nothing else. Just as I commenced with water, so do I want the miracle at the water to be completed with My name."[209]

Rabbi El'azar said, "The defective place was not perfected, but the sign proclaims a miracle nevertheless."[210] [30c]

Rabbi Yehoshu'a said, "It is written: *Make* לך (*lekha*), *for yourself, a serpent* (Numbers 21:8). *For yourself*—for your purpose. *For yourself*—mend that which you left deficient. Nonetheless, he repaired only vision, for they would look upon the snake and live; but the name was not sanctified in the water, still lacking the other.[211]

"You refined vision. *Go up to Mount Abarim… and you shall see* (Numbers 27:12)—*you see it with your own eyes,*

but you shall not cross over there (Deuteronomy 34:4). *You shall see it, and you shall be gathered to your kin* (Numbers 27:12). Come and see: His punishment had extended even to vision! However, once he constructed an object for viewing, God refined his vision. But the name was not consummated at the waters as had been done with the other names."[212]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "When the blessed Holy One said, *Therefore you will not bring*… (ibid. 20:12), Moses retorted, 'But this serpent is the curse of the world!' The blessed Holy One replied, 'Not so! He brings justice to sinners and life to exemplars of truth.' At the moment of [*whoever*…] *will see it will live* (ibid. 21:8), Moses understood His ways and validated His judgment. He opened, saying, *'The Rock—His action is perfect* (Deuteronomy 32:4).' This is the rock of which we have spoken. אל אמונה (*El emunah*), *A steadfast God, without wrong* (ibid.), as is written: [*whoever*…] *will see it will live*. And it is written: האל (*ha-El*), *the God, whose way is perfect* (Psalms 18:31)."[213]

Rabbi Ḥiyya objected, "But we have learned that *El* derives from compassion, as is said: *El, who brings them out of Egypt* (Numbers 23:22), and *El, compassionate and gracious* (Exodus 34:6)."[214]

He replied, "Not so! For we have learned that Compassion rules over Judgment. *El* alone has the ability; sovereignty is His. What does ability entail? Authority. For *El* overpowers His own decree, as is said: *El has my power* (Genesis 31:29). Sovereignty is His—power of the evil eye—as is said: *El has my power*."[215]

[Rabbi Ḥiyya] replied, "And it is also written: הגדול הגבור האל (*ha-El ha-gadol ha-gibbor*), *El, the great, the mighty* (Deuteronomy 10:17). The great *El* is triumphant; *El* alone is triumphant. It is also written: *The Rock, His action is perfect; for all His ways are justice* (Deuteronomy 32:4)—the rock. *El emunah, A steadfast God, without* עול (*avel*), *wrong* (ibid.)—*snake on a rock* (Proverbs 30:19)."[216]

“Let us return to our opening words. האל יעות (*Ha-el ye’avvet*), *Would El pervert, justice?* (Job 8:3). It is the way of the snake to follow a crooked path, hence it is written *without* עול (*avel*), *wrong. Would El, God, pervert justice?* God forbid!”[217]

Rabbi El’azar said, “This is as is written: *Let me hear what El YHVH would speak…* (Psalms 85:9).[218]

“*He reached out his hand and held it, and it became a staff in his grip* (Exodus 4:4). This is as is said: מטה (*matteh*), *Staff of justice* (Deuteronomy 27:19)—*matteh*, inclined toward *Ḥesed*.”[219]

Rabbi Yose said, “There were two staffs—one of Moses, and one of the blessed Holy One. What is the meaning of *staff of Elohim?* This is as we have learned: When Moses grasped the staff, it came into his domain—as if it were his. This is as is written: *Moses took the staff of Elohim in his hand* (Exodus 4:20). Once it said *Moses took*, don’t I know that he took it in his hand? If so, what is the meaning of *in his hand*? In his domain, under his aegis.”[220]

Rabbi Yose continued, “It was in the domain of Moses until the erection of the Dwelling. After the Dwelling was erected, the staff was returned—placed before the testimony; and he would take it from there to perform miracles. This is as is written: *Moses took the staff from before YHVH* (Numbers 20:9). Once he took it, it was in his domain—as if it were his.”[221]

Rabbi Yehoshu’a said, “The staff was made of sapphire, fabricated in the six days of creation. This is as we have learned: ‘the script and the staff.’”[222]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “It was made of wood.”

The one who said it was made of sapphire based it on this verse: *like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne* (Ezekiel 1:26); and it is also written *the staff of Elohim* (Exodus 17:9).[223]

The one who said it was made of wood based it on this verse: *YHVH showed him a tree…. There He set him* חק ומשפט (*ḥoq u-mishpat*), *statute and law*, ושם נסהו (*ve-sham nissahu*), *and He tested him there* (Exodus 15:25). The blessed Holy One said, "Henceforth it is *statute and law* for the performance of miracles. חק ומשפט (*Ḥoq u-mishpat*), *Engraved and just*—snake on a rock, as is written: *snake on a rock* (Proverbs 30:19). *Ve-sham nissahu*, [*The staff*] *performed a miracle there* (Exodus, ibid.), since it is written: *the waters turned sweet* (ibid.).[224]

Alternatively, the blessed Holy One said that from then onward, it is *statute and law* that would be sanctified only with sweetened waters.[225]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "It is written: *For they were bitter* (ibid., 23). From here we have learned that there are murky waters and there are clear waters; bitter waters and sweet waters.[226]

"*He cried out to YHVH* (ibid., 25). Why did he cry out? We learn from here that he had been in distress. The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Moses, the snake [30d] that was transformed at the bush must now be engraved upon the rock.' The two of them stood together at the bitter waters. At that moment, the snake נתחקק (*nitḥaqaq*), was engraved, upon the rock as it had been previously, as is written: *There He set for him* חק (*ḥoq*), *engraved, and just* (ibid.)."[227]

When Rabbi Abba came, they asked him about this; and he replied, "Rabbi Yehudah spoke well—so it is. But I must reveal the secret of the matter, now that I see that Rabbi Yehudah has exposed it.[228]

"Actually, the blessed Holy One said to Moses, 'Moses, in Egypt now the staff of Aaron suffices to sweep away the straw that rules over Israel in Egypt. But when they depart from Egypt, innumerable prosecutors will be appointed over Israel to push them into the sea: How much bitter water will be gathered against them! How much wicked water will persecute them!'[229]

“When they arrived at the sea, Rahab—archon of Egypt and the sea—came as well. The blessed Holy One said, ‘Moses, *raise your staff and stretch out your hand* (Exodus 14:16).’ Once He said *raise your staff*, what was the point of *and stretch out your hand*? The explanation is: *raise your staff*—against the prince of the sea.[230]

“When they arrived at Marah, how much mighty water had amassed against them. Moses agonized, crying out, as is said: *He cried out to YHVH* (ibid. 15:25). The blessed Holy One replied, ‘Moses, here is עצה (*eitsah*), an idea. Cast your staff against the waters, and *snake on a rock* (Proverbs 30:19) will be engraved—the two of them together; and the people will be saved,’ as is written: [*YHVH*] *showed him* עץ (*eits*), *a tree* (Exodus, ibid.). This is as is said: *The place where the tree falls* (Ecclesiastes 11:3)—this is the *eitsah*, idea. So, *he threw it into the water* (Exodus 15:25). And it is written: *There He set him, engraved and just* (ibid.)—*snake on a rock*.[231]

“*There* נסהו (*nissahu*), *He elevated it* (ibid.)—He crowned it with נסים (*nissim*), miracles. The blessed Holy One said to him, ‘From now on, you have something that will stand near the waters; you have something for sanctifying My Name in the waters.’[232]

“When they arrived at Elim, the waters came to denounce them. The blessed Holy One said to him, ‘Moses, in this place you don’t need the staff. See, here is Jacob—tree with seventy souls—alluded to by the seventy date palms; and the twelve springs allude to the twelve tribes.[233]

“‘Like seventy columns and twelve tribes, their merit will protect you in this place called אילן (*Ilan*), Tree.’ And this is the same as Elim, as is said: *For you will be ashamed* מאילים (*me-eilim*), *of the terebinths, that you desired* (Isaiah 1:29).[234]

“At once, they encamped there beside the waters. This can be derived from the verse *beside the waters* (Exodus 15:27). From *there he placed for him* (ibid., 25) we learn

that it excludes another place. The people of Israel were sovereign over the waters there, and the staff was unnecessary. But from then onward, the staff with *snake on a rock* was required beside the waters.[235]

"When they arrived at Horeb, the waters came to prosecute. The blessed Holy One said to him, '*You shall strike the rock* (ibid. 17:6)—the staff is needed here, and you shall strike them, upon that rock, but not with the snake.'[236]

"Moses replied, 'More is needed here! I can see that the waters are threatening to flood!' How did he know this? *Look, I am about to stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock* (ibid.).[237]

"The blessed Holy One replied to Moses, 'At Meribah the waters will prosecute with even greater severity since they are murky, wicked, and hostile. They will bond openly with Israel—before their eyes. Then the staff will be required, and you shall release the snake in full view, *before their eyes* (Numbers 27:14). Then My name will be sanctified, as is written: *sanctify me through the water before their eyes* (ibid.).' What is the meaning of *before their eyes*? Bonded with them openly.[238]

"Come and see: This is what David saw, as is written: *Had it not been YHVH who was for us when a man rose against us* (Psalms 124:2)—this alludes to Pharaoh. *Then it would have swept over us—the raging waters* (ibid., 5)—as we have said. And it is written: *Our life is like a bird escaped from the snare of the fowlers…* (ibid., 7)."[239]

Rabbi Abba said, "What did Moses see at that moment that led him to forgo the snake? The explanation is that the people of Israel were assailing him—'Give us water!' Moses considered the matter, and then said to himself, 'The blessed Holy One said to me to make a stand with the snake. But it seems to me that the snake cannot wield power over water, but rather only over dust, as is written: *dust shall you eat all the days of your life* (Genesis 3:14).

This implies that he will consume dust all his days, but not water. And Israel is pressuring me. Moreover, even if a miracle could be performed, it would not occur here—since the snake was engraved upon the dust and not upon the water, as is written: *He flung it on the ground and it became a snake* (Exodus 4:3). The rock was engraved with it at the waters at Marah, and the miracle already occurred with it a different time, as is written: *He struck the rock* [31a] *with his staff twice* (Numbers 20:11).'[240]

"The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Moses, *Inasmuch as you did not trust Me to sanctify Me* (Numbers 20:12)—reckoning that the snake has no power over water, *therefore you will not bring* (ibid.).'"[241]

PEIRUSH MERKEVET YEḤEZQEL פירוש מרכבת יחזקאל

Commentary on Ezekiel's Chariot

[T1 213b][242] *In the thirtieth year* (Ezekiel 1:1)—this has been established as the period in which Hilkiah the priest found the Torah Scroll; Yonatan translated it thus as well. Why did he count from that time? It has been explained that Ezekiel was the son of Jeremiah—abused while honoring his Master, since he had chastised Israel—and he was the son of Hilkiah.[243]

Thirtieth instructs further that there are three rungs, ten for each rung. These correspond to three generations—Hilkiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel—righteous one, son of a righteous one, and grandson of a righteous one. This teaches that he suckled prophecy from that line. Hilkiah merited to have a son who prophesied for forty years—Jeremiah. Just as Moses, of whom is written *A prophet like me from your midst, from your brothers,* YHVH *your God will raise up. Him shall you heed* (Deuteronomy 18:15), so with Jeremiah—who prophesied as he did; Moses had cautioned them to heed him, to avoid exile. Hilkiah merited to bring forth such a son into the world on account of his bringing

forth the Scroll of the Torah that had been secreted away in the Courtyard, thus returning Israel to the way of goodness.[244]

Come and see: Twenty-five years were enumerated for them to determine if they would return to their Master. Since they did not do *teshuvah*, Jehoiachin was exiled in the twenty-fifth year—twenty-five aroused against them as a decree, and they were exiled in the twenty-fifth year. It was five years into the exile of King Jehoiachin—thus, thirty years; consequently, *In the thirtieth year*.[245]

Alternatively, *In the thirtieth year*—corresponding to the thirty stages through which the moon is consummated. Now there had to be restitution for those thirty days through descent into exile.[246]

Alternatively—[*the thirtieth year*] corresponds to the three rungs that fill the well. Each of them comprises ten—since all royal crowns comprise ten—and corresponding to them all are one hundred blessings. Now those three flocks of sheep that were lying beside it are filled with judgment from the north side, and they stream into Her. This is why they dwelled there for thirty years. On account of them, the moon is called a month.[247]

Alternatively, *the fourth* (Ezekiel 1:1)—this alludes to Tammuz, first month in which judgment is aroused in the world, and beginning of judgments against Israel. After they received freedom from the Angel of Death, the fourth month aroused judgment against them, and freedom from the Angel of Death—bestowed upon them with the tablets—ceased.[248]

Come and see: For three months of the year judgment was aroused against them—Tammuz, Av, and Tevet. Tammuz—called the fourth—was first.[249]

Come and see: The Torah was given in the third—mystery of Written Torah, called Tree of Life. Corresponding to this, *In the thirtieth year* (ibid.)—mystery of three decades, the time that the Torah was found in the

days of Hilkiah. Now, in *the fourth*, judgment prevails over them.[250]

Even though She judged them, still She is with them in exile, as is written: אני (*Ani*), *I, will chastise you, even I* (Leviticus 26:28). Could you be punished with exile without אני (*Ani*), Me? The Torah teaches *even I*—with you in exile—alluding to *Shekhinah*, who will dwell with you. Thus, *And I was in the midst of the exile* (Ezekiel 1:1)—to be with you in anguish. Come and see: Since it is written *Happening it happened, that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi* (Ezekiel 1:3), it should say *Ezekiel was in the midst of the exile*. Why *I*?. This alludes to *Shekhinah*, who dwelt with them. *On the fifth day of the month* (ibid., 1)—mystery of lower ה (*he*) that descended into exile—it was revealed in a vision to Ezekiel.[251]

By the נהר כבר (*Nehar Kevar*), *River of Already* (ibid., 1)—river that already existed, for it אנהיר (*anhir*), had illuminated, Her. But then it cast Her off, vanishing above. She descended into exile, however, since Her children were masters of Torah—the artisan and the metalsmith—and She did not want to abandon [T1 214a] them there.[252]

היה היה (*Hayoh hayah*), *Happening it happened* (ibid., 3). *Hayoh* above, *hayah* below. *Hayoh* in the holy land, where She already spoke with him. *Hayah*—now in exile, for She came to speak with him on account of the merit of the people of Israel.[253]

יחזקאל (*Yeḥezqel*), *Ezekiel* (ibid.)—as is said, חזקו (*ḥazzequ*), *Strengthen, the hands that are slack* (Isaiah 35:3). This is why he was called Ezekiel—to fortify the hearts of Israel, broken in exile.[254]

Son of בוזי (*Buzi*), *Buzi*—since the people of Israel איתבזו (*itbazu*), were abused, in exile, despite the fact that they were called *a kingdom of priests* (Exodus 19:6), therefore he, too, was called *the priest, son of the abused* (Ezekiel 1:3).[255]

Alternatively, he was so called because he informed them of the cause of their exile—caused by their having מבזו (*mevazu*), spurned, the words of Jeremiah when they were in their land, and they rejected his teaching. That is why they sunk to the land of the Chaldeans.[256]

Come and see: When Israel repairs their actions, the left is restored to the right. This is as is written: *Your right hand smashes the enemy* (Exodus 15:6). It was the same array with Abraham—at first on the left side, in Ur of the Chaldeans. The blessed Holy One removed him from there and restored him to the right, as is written: *Abram journeyed, continually journeying toward the south* (Genesis 12:9). And even though he descended to Egypt, he returned afterward, as is written: *Abram went up from Egypt… to the south, together with Lot* (ibid. 13:1).[257]

Now, they have also aroused the verse *I took your father Abraham from beyond the Euphrates and led him* [*to the land of Canaan*] (Joshua 24:3), but Isaac remained there on his own side, to be reinforced in Judgment. Similarly with Ezekiel: at first, he received revelation in the land of the Chaldeans at the River of Already—on the left side—and in the end he returned to the right.[258]

In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, the fourteenth year after the city had fallen, at the beginning of the year, the tenth day of the month (Ezekiel 40:1), *a fugitive came to me from Jerusalem and reported, 'The city has fallen'* (ibid. 33:21). *He brought me, in visions of God, to the land of Israel; and He set me down on a very high mountain—on which there seemed to be the outline of a city on the south* (ibid. 40:2). Ezekiel was returned there so that it would be revealed to him where the people would cleave at the end of days. They would cleave to the right, never separating from there at all, as is written: *He brought me, in visions of God, to the land of Israel; and He set me down on a very high mountain—on which there seemed to be the outline of a city on the south*. The city returns from the left and will

suckle from the right—light of *Ḥesed*. Of this is written *a very high mountain*, as is said: *he shall be exalted and raised, and be very high* (Isaiah 52:13). This refers to the moon, as we have established.[259]

Now in the land of the Chaldeans, *there the hand of YHVH came upon me* (Ezekiel 1:3)—She went down there, as it were, on account of righteous ones. And he was thrice meritorious—merit of Hilkiah, Jeremiah, and his own; they had been crowned with Torah during those thirty years, from the time that the book was discovered. Thus, *upon me* —actually![260]

Now it must be explained that his vision was intended to fortify the hearts of Israel, broken in exile, and that is why he was called *Yeḥezqel*.

He said, *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north* (ibid., 4). This was an arousal of the left side—aroused to execute judgment, come to stand facing his place in the south. The left came to rule over the right, as is written: *a great cloud and flashing fire* (ibid.). *A great cloud* —right. *Flashing fire*—the left was sovereign, and Judgment was aroused in the world, since it is written: *He has withdrawn His right hand in the face of the enemy* (Lamentations 2:3). Of this, the great cloud is surrounded by the stormy wind on one side and fire on the other.[261]

Nevertheless, *a radiance surrounding* לו (*lo*), *him* (ibid.) —the blessed Holy One shone upon him slightly while in exile, so that the people there would not be scornful—suggesting that Ezekiel did not see anything below in the west, nor truly see anything on the right side, above.[262]

Come and see: All rungs are contained within the *hand of YHVH*. Streaming into Her are a thread of love from the side of Abraham, Judgment from the side of Isaac, and *a radiance surrounding him* from the side of Compassion (who is called *him*).[263]

Now that thread of love—called *great cloud*—is veiled within Her before Judgment. It mutates here, but above, *I*

am YHVH—I have not varied (Malachi 3:6). Consequently, *you are the children of Jacob—you have not ceased to be* (ibid.).[264]

From within it (Ezekiel 1:4)—the stormy wind.[265]

Like the color of amber, from within the fire (ibid.)—clothed in fire.

From within it was the appearance of four creatures (ibid., 5)—holy angels close to the palace of the King. They are called *creatures* since the side of Life shines upon them. And lest one err and say that they were actual creatures, Scripture says, *this was their appearance: they had the image of Adam* (ibid.)—[T1 214b] *Adam*, superior to all.[266]

Each one had four faces (ibid., 6)—to turn in any direction.

The image of their face was a human face (ibid., 10)—that is, for all of them—each of the four creatures had the face of a human, so that each creature could face the south. *The face of a lion on the right* (ibid.)—of the human face, that is, on the eastern side of each of the four. *On the left, a bull's face* (ibid.)—on the left of the south, that is, toward the west. *The four of them*—for each of the four of them. *And the four of them had an eagle's face* (ibid.)—on the side facing north.[267]

Since he encountered it from the south, the north side within was obscure to him—for each creature, was it the eagle or the serpent that was privileged? Well, everything is as they explained: if the people were meritorious, it was נשר (*nesher*), the eagle; if not meritorious, its strength נשר (*nashar*), was stripped away, its power given over to the serpent. For he dwells there on the northern side, waiting to rule.[268]

Come and see: This eagle is in the place of Jacob—alluding to *Teli*, as is written: *the eagle's way in the heavens* (Proverbs 30:19)—actually! It is inscribed here on the north side because Jacob wants it to protect his house—called House of Jacob—from that serpent, so that it will not be

able to approach and desecrate the Temple of Jacob at all. This is why he had to be shrewdly calculating, and this is why he was called Jacob. The blessed Holy One called him thus so that he would become shrewd in response to that serpent.[269]

Come and see: Even though *Adam* is in the south, sometimes he is in the west to draw down a thread of grace for Her. Sometimes She ascends upward in the south, cleaving to the right, as is said: *YHVH's utterance to Adonai: 'Sit at My right hand'* (Psalms 110:1).[270]

The bull dwells in the west, rising sometimes to the north to absorb judgment from there—when the world needs it. Similarly, they are all contained this one in that, demonstrating that all is one.[271]

PARASHAT YITRO פרשת יתרו

"Jethro" (Exodus 18:1–20:23)

[*ZḤ* 31a][272] *I am YHVH your God* (Exodus 20:2).[273]

Rabbi Yeisa the Younger—one of the companions—asked Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai about this verse. He said, "I have one question I would like to ask you, and it has been knocking about in my mind, but I have been afraid to ask. I've said to myself, 'If I ask, I'm frightened lest I be punished; but if I don't ask, it will rattle about in my mind.'"[274]

"Speak," Rabbi Shim'on replied.

He said to him, "The blessed Holy One reminds Israel in each and every place *I am YHVH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt* (ibid.). *I am YHVH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt* (Leviticus 19:36)—what extra is being taught here? The condition was said fully to Abraham: *your seed will be strangers in a land not theirs... and afterward they will go forth with great substance* (Genesis 15:13–14). If so, why remind them about this in each and every place!"[275]

Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai replied, "Come and see, my son. The blessed Holy One assured Abraham only that He

would bring Israel out from the exile in Egypt, but not from enslavement to a different abomination. For when the people of Israel were in Egypt they had truly defiled and sullied themselves with all kinds of impurity, until they dwelt beneath forty-nine powers of impurity. The blessed Holy One brought them out of bondage to all those other forces. Moreover, He ushered them into the corresponding forty-nine gates of understanding. He had not promised this to Abraham, rather merely to take them out of Egypt; indeed, He acted graciously and lovingly with them.[276]

"Consequently, the exodus from Egypt appears fifty times in the Torah, to show the entire world the love that the blessed Holy One displayed in extracting them from those forces of impurity and conducting them into the forces of purity—these are the fifty gates of understanding. This is why we count from the festival day of Passover, counting days and weeks. The companions have aroused that it is a commandment to count the days and another commandment to count the weeks, because on each day He brought them out from a force of impurity and conducted them into a force of purity."[277] [41b][278]

"*God spoke all these words, saying* (Exodus 20:1). Is this the only instance of 'a single utterance'? And yet we have established that *I am YHVH your God* and *You shall have no* [*other gods beside Me*] (Exodus 20:2–3) were proclaimed in a single utterance! These and no others?[279]

"Ah, the explanation is that these constitute the essential principle of all, the principle for the entire Torah. The same holds for *zakhor ve-shamor, remember* (ibid., 8) and *guard* (Deuteronomy 5:12). Since *remember* and *guard* are the essential principle of all they encompass, these too are mentioned, as they are also the essential principle. *Remember* and *guard*: *I am—remember*; *you shall have no —guard*. All in a single utterance.[280]

“What is the meaning of ‘a single utterance’? A single utterance and not two—truly—since this utterance comprises all voices. It was proclaimed with greater force and power than the others—for He knocked on each and every one with a whisper, whereas this one He spoke. Since they were all whispered—unheard—it is written *All the people saw* [*the voices*] (Exodus 20:15), not *All the people heard*, because they did not hear at all! Rather, they all came, and each and every one kissed the whispered utterance, like one kissing out of loving affection. Then the utterance was elucidated, the word spoken and proclaimed.[281]

“Of this is written *God spoke all these words, saying* (ibid., 1), for they are the principle of *remember* and *guard*, of *I am* and *you shall have no* (ibid., 2–3).[282]

“*I am* is the principle of all the commandments of the Torah that are included in *remember*—positive commandments. אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I am*, is the principle of male and female as one. Now if one says that this is the mystery of the throne—it is not just the throne, not at all! Rather, it is the mystery of זכור (*zakhor*), *Remember*, alluding to the male. But, even though it is male, it is the principle of male and female as one.[283]

“This is all well and good, but אני (*ani*), *I*, is the mystery of the holy covenant, foundation of the world; and the כ (*khaf*) embraced within it—mystery of the Female. Wherever this כ (*kaf*) is found, it alludes to the Female who is called *Keter*. Consequently, all is one—mystery of Male and Female as one; and the totality is called *Remember* since Male is never alone, nor is Female ever alone—never separating from one another.[284]

“*Remember* approaches His Female, and *Guard* also approaches the mystery of *vav*, which is Male—never separating from one another. *Anokhi* is the principle of Male and Female as one, and it is all called *Remember*. Why? Well, it is because He takes the Female and embraces Her

within Him; hence She is not mentioned—He alone. When She draws close toward Her Husband and He approaches Her—as is said: *until I brought him to my mother's house* (Song of Songs 3:4)—She assumes the name; and everything is called *Guard*. Why? Because She has drawn Him toward Her, absorbing Him; so the entire house abides within Her domain, and all that is mentioned is Her alone—never do they separate from one another.[285]

"*Anokhi*—mystery of mysteries for knowers of wisdom. When those letters emerged in mystery—blended as one—a *Botsitsa*, spark, shot forth, hewing out an emanation. On this side it meted out ten cubits—seventy-one flashing sparkles bursting out. Scintilla flared, gleams ascending and descending, then subsiding, stabilizing in their ascent as they rose, higher and higher. Meting out ten cubits on the other side; there, too, flashing sparkles burst out as in that first array, and then similarly on all sides.[286]

"The *Botsitsa* spread about, circling round and round. Sparkles and gleams flared, rising higher and higher, heavens flaring—all celestial forces glistening and sparkling as one. Afterward the *Botsitsa* spiraled from the southern side, measuring and encircling from there to the east; from the east, to the north—until [41c] it had surrounded it—then returning to the south, as before. Afterward the *Botsitsa* revolved, rising, sparkles and gleams subsiding.[287]

"Then those letters burst forth, engraved and flaming—scintilla flaring like gold. When the sparks flare, it is like the sparkling from a smith, smelting silver and gold, causing everything to emerge from the flashing fire completely clarified and refined. Here, too, letters shot out refined, clarified, from the midst of the emanation of the *Botsitsa*. Of this is written *The word of YHVH is refined* (Psalms 18:31), like one who refines silver and gold.[288]

"When the letters shot out, they all emerged refined, engraved, clarified, sparkling, and flaring. All the people of

Israel saw them, bursting in air, ranging toward all sides, until they came to be engraved upon tablets of stone.[289]

"Come and see: When these letters emerged in the mystery of the totality of Male and Female, clarified and engraved, one letter—inscribed and hewn—rose above those letters, crowning them. That letter journeyed among them all, engraved from the mystery of the spark—this is the letter *vav* that ascends above all other letters, engraved upon them all.[290]

"This is the mystery of *All the people saw the sounds and the flashes, and the sound of the shofar* (Exodus 20:15). *The sounds*—these are the other letters that emerged from those sounds (as we have said), appearing in the air before the eyes of all, as is written: *the sounds*. It is not written *all the people saw* קולות (*qolot*), *sounds*, but rather את הקולות (*et ha-qolot*), *the sounds*, alluding to the letters that issued from them.[291]

"ואת (*Ve-et*), *And the, sound of the shofar*—this is the letter *vav* that rose above all the letters and engraved them, as described. This is because the mystery of *vav* is called *sound of the shofar*; this is why it is written [*they*] *saw*.[292]

"When they did hear, they heard only a single קול (*qol*), voice, speaking, as is written: *A voice of words you heard* (Deuteronomy 4:12)—alluding to the voice called *words*, because He spoke one word alone.[293]

"Even though all of Israel saw the glory of the blessed Holy One, it was like one seeing through a crystal. They were gazing in order to learn the wisdom in those emerging letters, but they saw illumination shining from another light. Of this is written *For you saw no image* (ibid., 15).[294]

"*Anokhi*—mystery of *Remember*, mystery of the Male—struck, shining upon Speech, causing these letters to emerge and to be crowned. Through those letters they saw and heard the word called *Anokhi*—this is what they saw through gazing upon those letters. They heard the letters' word, as is written: *A voice of words you heard* (ibid., 12)—a

hearing that fashioned words out of the letters that they had seen. Even though it was *a voice of words*, and God spoke, He uttered only the word constituted of those letters, as has been said.[295]

"*Anokhi*—mystery of כלל (*kelal*), general principle. פרט (*Perat*), Particular—*YHVH your God* (Exodus 20:1). *YHVH*—mystery of *Remember. Your God*—mystery of *Guard*. Here is *kelal* and *perat*; and the Torah is crowned with this mystery. *Anokhi*—mystery of *Remember* in *kelal* and *perat*—principle of the entire Torah and of the commandments of the Torah, since this is the totality of *Remember* and *Guard* as one. This is as we have established according to the Book of Solomon regarding the engraving of the crowning of letters.[296]

"אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I*—י א (*alef yod*), mystery of the Male; נ כ (*nun khaf*), Female. This is well said, and so it has been taught. אני (*Ani*), *I*—mystery of Male and Female as one, since bent *nun* is always female. Here, too, *Anokhi*—all as one.[297]

"Why did it employ *Anokhi* and not *Ani*? Ah, the explanation is that נ כ (*nun khaf*) are two females, and we have learned that the array of *Shekhinah* below is like that of *Shekhinah* above—all appearing in the word *Anokhi*, in a single bond.[298]

"*Anokhi*—principle of the Male, mystery of the entirety of faith, totality of realms above and below. *Yod*—above, above, beginning of all faith. נ כ (*Nun khaf*)—two females [41d]—upper and lower; two worlds, upper and lower. א (*Alef*), mystery of its middle shaft—taking from all sides—from above and from its sides. Of this, the entire mystery of faith is present here. Since everything is suspended here in a single bond—a single compact—He began with this word, crowning the mystery of Torah with this word.[299]

"*Anokhi*—*kelal* of all. *YHVH* אלהיך (*Eloheikha*), *your God*—*perat* of all—complete name engraved upon Israel, always. Come and see: *YHVH Elohim*—complete name upon a complete world. The world was established alone and crowned with [that

name], since at that time there were no people or tongue for it to crown—thus, *YHVH Elohim*. When Israel arrived and stood at Mount Sinai, and they received the Torah, then the consummate name crowned them; and He was called *Eloheikha, your God*.[300]

"When Moses said *YHVH our God* (Deuteronomy 6:4)—since he was the glory of Israel, Aaron the high priest was with him, and Moses' sons on the other side—he was crowned with the consummate name more than Israel was; and that is why he said *our God*. Nonetheless, he included all of Israel, since it is not written *YHVH God*, but rather *YHVH, our God*—all as one, crowning them. Of this: the people of Israel were crowned at Mount Sinai, crowned as one with the consummate name. Before then He was not called *YHVH Eloheikha, your God*, but rather *YHVH Elohim*.[301]

"When Israel received the Torah, ם (final *mem*)—sealed, because [Torah] was sealed within it—opened up, conveying illumination below to crown Israel. Once final *mem* opened up, conveying illumination below, ך (final *kaf*) was fashioned. Of this we have learned in the mystery of letters that the measure of final *kaf* equals the measure of the concealment of *mem*. Similarly, concealment and extension of ן (final *nun*) below equals the doubled measure of bent *nun*. It is all one mystery—all issuing from *voice of words* (Deuteronomy 4:12) (as we have said), as is written: *God spoke all these words, saying* (Exodus 20:1)."[302]

PARASHAT TERUMAH פרשת תרומה

"Offering" (Exodus 25:1–27:19)

Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai said, "When a person rises early in the morning, puts tefillin on his head and tefillin with the holy insignia on his arm, enwraps himself in a wrap of *mitsvah*, and is about to go out of the entrance of his house, four holy angels join him, emerging with him from the entrance, and they escort him to the synagogue,

proclaiming before him, 'Give honor to the image of the Holy King! Give honor to the son of the King, to the countenance of the Holy King!' The Holy Spirit settles upon him and proclaims, '*Israel, in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3).'[303]

"After this, one should read the portion of *Bereshit* until *one day* (Genesis 1:5)—paragon and praise of all. Afterward he should delve in the portion of the sacrificial offerings to procure atonement; and all the other sacrifices, too. He should recite *Command Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the teaching of the ascent offering'* (Leviticus 6:2) to gain atonement for all of his nighttime reveries and imaginings. Afterward he sings songs of King David, gaining entry to the gates of the house of the Bride—She is adorned, rungs arrayed with Her.[304]

"When he gets to 'Who Forms Light'—beginning of the prayer recited seated—all the rungs open gates. Then *as columns of smoke* (Song of Songs 3:6) is written—*as columns of smoke* of incense rise, here too rungs rise, blending and bonding with each [42a] other, for he has linked them.[305]

"Then he shall say 'They are all beloved, all pure, all mighty….' Afterward, he recites 'Abundant Love' in order to ascend and bond with the right. [Afterward he recites] the unification of *Shema* and its paragraphs; and She is called *perfumed with myrrh* (ibid.). Afterward, אמת ויציב (*Emet ve-Yatsiv*), "True and Firm," alluding to *frankincense* (ibid.). Even though this blessing belongs to Her, it is part of the whole.[306]

"Now, once one has said אמת (*emet*), true, what is the need for יציב (*yatsiv*), which is simply the Aramaic translation? What purpose does it serve? Well, actually, every instance of *emet* alludes to Jacob, while *yatsiv* alludes to Joseph; and one must cleave to them both. Since the paragraph of *tsitsit* (tassels)—mystery of the Bride—is in need of them, we recite both *emet* and *yatsiv* immediately. Of this, *emet* alludes to Jacob, and *yatsiv* alludes to Joseph.[307]

“But, why in Aramaic? Ah, it is because we may not say ‘true, true,’ since that would signify a flaw. This is why it appears in Aramaic, so that there is no blemish in the pair.[308]

“*All sorts of merchant’s powders* (ibid.) alludes to prayer recited while standing. The first three blessings are ‘Shield,’ ‘Who Resurrects,’ and ‘You Are Holy.’ ‘Shield’ has forty-two words, in the mystery of the holy Name of Forty-Two Letters. One must enfold it in one’s heart, and bond with it in the mystery of the flame and the coal—with love for one’s Master. This is the blessing on the right.[309]

“‘Who Resurrects’ contains forty-nine words, in the mystery of fifty gates minus one, and contains the name of the mystery of Powers of *YHVH*. אתה גבור לעולם אדני (*Attah gibbor le’olam Adonai*), You are eternally mighty, *Adonai*—its mystery is אגלא (*AGLA*); according to a different mystery, יגלא (*YGLA*). But, really, it is all one mystery from the powers of the following blessings: יהודה (*Yehudah*), *Judah, it is you whom* [*your brothers*] *will acclaim* (Genesis 49:8); *a lion’s* גור (*gur*), *whelp, is Judah* (ibid., 9); *the scepter* לא (*lo*), *shall not, pass from Judah* (ibid., 10); אסרי (*osrei*), *he binds, to the vine his donkey* (ibid., 11). Through this, Judah is aroused in Holy Might—blessing of the left.[310]

“‘Holiness’ contains fourteen words—alluding to ten utterances and four letters—encompassing all sides, unifying them from one end of the world to the other.[311]

“The last three are not included in these calculations of words. They are ‘Find Favor’ and ‘Thanksgiving’—supports for the Torah, two columns; and ‘Grant שלום (*Shalom*), Peace’—alluding to Tree of Life, שלמא (*shelama*), consummation, of the house, consummation of all.[312]

“Between these and those, in the middle, are the blessings ordained by the ancient ones, and this has been established.[313]

“After finishing one’s prayer and confessing one’s sins comes prostration. What is prostration? They have ordained

that one must enact all that Moses performed—prayer, petitions, pleas, and full prostration—as is written: *I threw myself before YHVH* (Deuteronomy 9:18).[314]

"But [the esoteric meaning is that] even after one has concluded one's prayer and entered into all those celestial rungs—bonding the Bride to them all—one needs to descend below; and once he is descending, he must prostrate himself with the alphabet. Why? Since he has offered his prayer and confessed his sins, henceforth he displays himself as one who has sacrificed his soul to his Master with the love of *For David. To You, YHVH, I give up my soul* (Psalms 25:1). This provides comfort to the side where death hovers, providing comfort with this practice.[315]

"Furthermore—mystery of mysteries in the alphabetic acrostic for wise ones. In this acrostic there is no *vav*, but a *pe* appears in its place—פדה (*pedeh*), *Redeem, God, Israel from all its straits* (Psalms 25:22). Afterward, *resh* appears twice, and there is no *qof*. What is the explanation? The answer is that since one casts himself to death in this prostration, he must direct his will and provide comfort to that side, where death rests.[316]

"This is like a קוף (*qof*), monkey, in the desert or mountains who plays dead—simulating death before a frightening beast. When the beast approaches, preparing to kill it and tear it apart, the beast sees the monkey fall to the ground as if dead, and thinks that it has died. Then it retreats and does not attack.[317]

"This is why those two letters disappeared, so that no one but the blessed Holy One will see them. Throughout, with intention of the heart, he should present himself before the blessed Holy One as one who has sacrificed his soul lovingly; and then the blessed Holy One considers him as if He had taken his soul away.

"Therefore one must prostrate on the ground as if dead when reciting the prayer of prostration, since there are some transgressions that a person commits for which

atonement comes only through death. This is as is written: [42b] *This iniquity shall not be purged* [*from you until you die*] (Isaiah 22:14). Now that he is considered as one whose soul was taken by the blessed Holy One, having ceded it willingly, that moment is established as atonement for his sins, and as completion on all sides—even for that side of which we have spoken.[318]

"Regarding all this, prayer ascends between the two arms of loving embrace, fittingly. This is the meaning of *perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, all sorts of merchant's powders* (Song of Songs 3:6)."[319]

Moses needed forty days to learn the Oral Torah since that rung is called "forty." Hence Scripture says *Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights* (Exodus 24:18)—Written Torah and Oral Torah were interlaced. This is why it was necessary to state specifically *forty days and forty nights—forty days* should have sufficed, but on the fortieth day She radiated להורתם (*le-horatam*), *to instruct them* (ibid., 12), in Torah and commandment. These correspond to the forty days of fetus formation, emerging from potential to deed, and the limbs of the Male are inscribed with those forty days.[320]

Alternatively, forty days for absorbing supernal light, and for his body to be formed there by that supernal light—in order to be fit to serve before the King, and to draw the spirit of prophecy upon himself below.[321]

Just as his body was completed below in his mother's belly over forty days, so was he completed above. Of this is written *in all My house he is trusted* (Numbers 12:7), for he has been perfected in My House above, like the array in the house below. Of this is written *the skin of Moses' face was radiant* (Exodus 34:35)—shining from a celestial radiance, drawing *fine oil* (Psalms 133:2) upon his head. Each of his four elements was perfected tenfold, yielding forty days and

forty nights. He drew *fine oil* upon his head; and then he was illuminated.[322]

Afterward, Aaron came; and Moses taught him his lesson, drawing down that light upon his beard: two gemmed droplets descended upon Aaron's beard, shining with abundant light. They allude to Written Torah and Oral Torah, interlaced in Aaron's beard, their bond suspended from a heavenly constellation. And then, *how good and how pleasant* (ibid., 1). [*Good*]—alluding to Written Torah, this is Righteous One. *Pleasant*—Songs of Israel, called *pleasant* when pleasantness from above, from World that is Coming, rests upon Him.[323]

Everything is united as one by Aaron by means of the sacrificial offering. Of this is written *My covenant was with him…* (Malachi 2:5)—alluding to My *Matronita*—priesthood of My people. *Life and peace* (ibid.)—*Life* of Supernal Mother; *peace*—alludes to Prince of Peace. *Which I gave to him, and of reverence, which he showed Me* (ibid.). He bestowed these rungs upon him, joining them—He bestowed those two gemmed droplets upon him.[324]

When he passed a razor upon his beard—that is, trimming it—as is said: ומורה (*U-morah*), *And no razor, shall touch his head* (Judges 13:5)—[מורא (*mora*), *reverence*], *he feared Me* (Malachi 2:5), perhaps he profaned that oil that flowed onto him from My supernal name, name from which flowed *fine oil* (2 Kings 20:13)! Of this is written *For he stood in awe of My name* (Malachi 2:5).[325]

What did he do? *In peace and uprightness he walked with me* (ibid. 2:6)—tying together *peace* and *uprightness*. What is the meaning of *upright*? As is said: *righteous and upright is He* (Deuteronomy 32:4), and *Many he returned from iniquity* (Malachi 2:6)—by means of the sacrifices that he offered on their behalf before the King. Then *peace* was bequeathed to *uprightness*. Mysteries of the sacrifices that the blessed Holy One conveyed to Aaron are derived from

here. He is called *upright* since he drew down Torah and splendor into the lower world.[326]

East shines upon south first, as is written: [*The sun*…] *Moving toward the south* (Ecclesiastes 1:6). Consequently, *Aaron and all the chiefs in the community came back to him* (Exodus 34:31). *Aaron*—mystery of Aaron, illuminated from Moses. *All the chiefs*—alludes to Nahshon, leader of the chiefs, all drawn after him, standing to the left of Moses. They have aroused regarding *Your greatness* (Deuteronomy 3:24)—this alludes to Aaron, on the right. *Your mighty hand* (ibid.)—Nahshon, on the left.[327]

After the south is illuminated by the speculum that shines, the north is illuminated, as is written: *Moving toward the south, and circling toward the north* (Ecclesiastes 1:6), the light of Compassion bounding it [42c] on all sides, preventing it from bursting out in flames and incinerating the world. Then Judgment is aromatized by Compassion. Who is Compassion? The sun, also called wind, as is written: *Round and round whirls the wind* (ibid.)—Compassion surrounding all.[328]

On its rounds the wind returns (ibid.)—whose *rounds*? *Rounds* of that place, of whom is written above *He pants toward His place* (ibid., 5)—the west. *The wind returns*, shining upon those seventy years that encompass His place—illuminating worlds, and illuminating seventy myriads of archons who are posted around *His place*, belonging to the sun, as mentioned.[329]

Come and see: In the same way, Moses illuminates Aaron below, side of the south, and the chiefs afterward, side of the north, as is written: *circling toward the north* (ibid., 6)—surrounding them, around the altar. Afterward, *I will draw upon the spirit that is on you and put it on them* (Numbers 11:17)—this is the meaning of *on its rounds the wind returns*.[330]

Come and see: At first, the seventy elders suckled from Moses, but those on the edges of the camp were consumed

in the blazing fire. The cause of their fate has been aroused. Once Moses saw that the people could not endure without elders, he sought help to illuminate the people of Israel. The blessed Holy One said to him, "*Gather for Me* [*seventy men*]... *and I will draw upon the* רוח (*ruaḥ*), *spirit, that is on you* [*and put it on them*]" (ibid., 16–17)—this is the spirit of the speculum that shines, resting upon Moses but no other. As a result, they needed to be illuminated by him. This is the meaning of *on its rounds the* רוח (*ruaḥ*), *wind, returns*—to shine as before.[331]

Once Solomon beheld this prophecy, he said *Breath of breaths*... (Ecclesiastes 1:2).[332]

The sun shines (ibid., 5)—in the days of Moses, when the sun shone upon Israel for forty years, corresponding to the light that he received above in those forty days when he was there. Part of that first year is deemed like an entire year, for in it he received the light that he shone below. *The sun sets* (ibid.)—when he left the world.[333]

He pants toward His place (ibid.)—as is said: *Blessed be the glory of YHVH from His place* (Ezekiel 3:12). This alludes to a supernal place shining upon a lower place.[334]

Alternatively, *His place*—below, actually. His light *pants* from above and shines below onto the moon—alluding to Joshua, who is illuminated from Moses. This is as is written: *You shall set some of your splendor upon him* (Numbers 27:20). And they have aroused: "Moses' face shone like the face of the sun..."[335]

Moving toward the south (Ecclesiastes 1:6). In the beginning, when he was in the world, all sides were illuminated, as has been said; but now since he has vanished, he shines upon his place, but no farther.[336]

PARASHAT TSAV פרשת צו

"Command" (Leviticus 6:1–8:36)

[46c][337] And on the left side stands another rung, on the side of impurity, also called Thought. But she is called Wicked Thought, since the rung above her is Wickedness—hence she is called Wicked Thought. Here abide all vile desires, disgusting fantasies, and all worldly depredations. She is the foundation for all those cravings with which men defile themselves. Within this Wicked Thought exist diverse impure rungs—all poised to defile a man with those cravings and fantasies from Wicked Thought. In this manner a person becomes impure through them, and cleaves to that side.[338]

This is why one must offer an ascent offering—to be purified. Upon bringing that offering one must divert his will toward Holy Thought. Smoke wafts from the fats, sacrificial parts, and the limbs toward Wicked Thought, ascending there first—She snatches them all up and is nourished by them.[339]

Afterward, another ethereal plume rises. Supernal ones throng—lords of judgment among them—entering within, within, until they are gathered in one another, until they all scale upward, intermingling within one another, consummating one another. Then body interlaces with body.[340]

In this manner a man crowns his will with the will of Pure Thought. Next, the priest from the right side and the Levite from the left side bind limbs with limbs, until Pure Thought ascends between right and left—joining this one with that one, linking this one with that one, until they are one. Then it is called *pleasing* (Leviticus 1:9)—soothing and desirous for joining and infusing one another.[341]

Once they are all intermingled, World that is Coming emits all its light, illuminating them all as one. Then there is total joy, all faces shine, and all are fragrant. He separates from within Wicked Thought and cleaves to Pure Thought until everything cleaves within Concealed Thought, higher than all—all becoming one.[342]

The remains of the sacrificial offering shall be burnt and consumed at night so that no one may delight in it. What is the meaning of this ascent offering—offering of ascendance—that people may not delight in it? The explanation is that the only reason that this offering was brought was because one had been seduced by Wicked Thought, side of impurity. Therefore, lest this side become pervasive or cause diversion, the entire animal is returned to the fire to be consumed—then no one at all will have pleasure from this offering.[343]

At night, all the remains shall be consumed, as is written: *upon its hearth on the altar all night* (Leviticus 6:2). When evening begins, all those wardens of law appear, traveling about, ruling over all those sacrificial parts and fats. These scraps are entirely consumed, and all those wardens of law are nourished by them. This is their lot—to prevent them from ruling, and so that they will not approach the realm of holiness.[344]

The man must separate himself from that side and cleave to Heavenly Will. Then His Master forgives him, and the priest atones for him, as is written: *the priest shall atone for him, for his transgression* (ibid. 4:26).[345]

PARASHAT AḤAREI MOT פרשת אחרי מות

"After the Death" (Leviticus 16:1–18:30)

[48a][346] Sabbath Meals—corresponding to all those supernal legions. *Moses said, 'Eat it today, for today is a sabbath, to YHVH today'* (Exodus 16:25). *Today*—three times—like the tally of three meals that are called "delight." What is "delight"? It is as is written: *call the Sabbath 'delight'* (Isaiah 58:13); and *A river flows from Eden to water the garden* (Genesis 2:10).[347]

Tally of three exiles—in correspondence to them Moses uttered *Ehyeh, Ehyeh, Ehyeh*: three times. *Ehyeh, I will be*, with you in the first exile, as they said: They were exiled to Egypt

—*Shekhinah* was with them. *Ehyeh, I will be*, with you in the second exile, as they said: They were exiled to Babylon—*Shekhinah* was with them. *Ehyeh, I will be*, with you in the third exile, as they said: They were exiled to Greece—*Shekhinah* was with them. The fourth *Ehyeh* was not revealed to them, but rather, *I, YHVH, will hasten it in its time* (Isaiah 60:22)—if they prove worthy, *I will hasten it*; if not, *in its time*.[348]

Rabbi Pinḥas said, "The blessed Holy One wished to test Israel…[349]

"Come and see: If they had done *teshuvah*, they would not have remained in exile for even one full day."[350]

He asked him in a whisper, "What is [48b] one day?"[351]

He replied, "*Look, the day is still long; it is not time to gather in the herd…* (Genesis 29:7). If they return in *teshuvah*, they will depart in the period of a day, as the prophet stated. But if *it is not time to gather in the herd; water the sheep and go and let them graze* (ibid.).[352]

"From the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava: If they do not do *teshuvah*, they will not emerge until the name of the blessed Holy One—*YHVH*—is perfected."[353]

Alternatively, Israel is compared to a dove; its wings, to commandments. Just as when a dove has wings, and the wings are perfected, no bird in the world can seize her, so too with Israel—when they are perfected by commandments, no one in the world can defeat them. This is as is written in the portion of Balaam: *How can I curse whom God has not cursed; how can I doom whom YHVH has not doomed?* (Numbers 23:8). But afterward *They whored after their gods… and the wrath of YHVH flared against them* (Exodus 34:15; Numbers 25:3).[354]

Of this is written *Do not stray after your heart and after your eyes, after which you go whoring* (Numbers 15:39). What is the meaning of *after your heart and after your eyes*? רק רע (*Raq ra*), *Nothing but evil, all the time* (Genesis

6:5)—Esau and Ishmael. Similarly, ‘רע רע (*ra ra*), *Wicked, wicked,’ he says*… (Proverbs 20:14).[355]

Of this is written *you will see My back, but My face will not be seen* (Exodus 33:23), as is written: *He has withdrawn His right hand* (Lamentations 2:3); and *Let me hide My face from them; I shall see what their end will be*… (Deuteronomy 32:20).[356]

Of this is written: What was it like when Israel was whole-hearted before *YHVH? Face-to-face YHVH spoke with you* (ibid. 5:4). But if not, from the side of the back—this alludes to illicit sexual relations, as is written: *Your father’s nakedness and your mother’s nakedness you shall not expose* (Leviticus 18:7).[357]

There is also אחור (*aḥor*), a back side, to holiness, as is written: *They will go* אחרי (*aḥarei*), *after, YHVH, who will roar like a lion* (Hosea 11:10). It is called “face” in relation to what is below, and “back” in relation to what is above. It is called “profane” in relation to what is above, and “holy” in relation to what is below.[358]

This is what Moses sought, to know “face” in relation to what is above; but he was answered, “*No human can see Me and live* (Exodus 33:20).” Afterward, he asked that God grant soul to Israel from “face” below—called “back” in relation to what is above. And He replied, “*You will see My back*” (ibid., 23)—*you will see*, but *they will not see* (ibid.). Understand from here that for Moses [the vision was] as if from the back, whereas for Israel it was like the face. Of this He said *they will not see*, but He did not say *You shall not see*.[359]

Come and see: On account of the sin of Primal Adam, they lost the supernal “face”; and on account of the sin of the calf, they lost the lower “face”—called “back” in relation to what is above. With each and every exile they were depleted. This is a great mystery![360]

All this is alluded to in the name יהוה (*YHVH*): י (*yod*)—upper face; ה (*he*)—back in relation to *yod*, and face in

relation to ו (*vav*); *vav* is “back” in relation to upper *he*, and “face” in relation to lower *he*; *he* is “back” in relation to *vav*, and “face” in relation to mystery below.[361]

What is the relationship between *YHVH*—who is called “back”—to *YHVH* above? This is the distinction between the Holy and the Holy of Holies. *YHVH* above is Heavenly Adam; *YHVH* below—the third—is called “back” in relation to the second name. The second name is “face” in relation to this one—the one who distinguishes holy and profane. They are three in total—*Ehyeh, Ehyeh, Ehyeh*—three times.[362]

Alternatively, *Moses said, ‘Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to YHVH; today you will not find it in the field’* (Exodus 16:25). This verse has been established by the companions. Beneath the celestial calyx—calyx appointed over the twenty-two letters—in the supernal signet ring, two sides are gathered into the ring. And the signet ring is square for the four sides of the world.[363]

They grasp this ring from one side and the other—on the right and on the left. The one on the right ascends to the head; and once it is upright, it takes along six hundred thousand mighty men—men with swords fastened at their thighs. This is as is written: *about six hundred thousand on foot—the men, aside from noncombatants* (Exodus 12:37). The one on the left rises afterward; and when it is upright, it takes along six hundred thousand masters of wings—with loving faces. Then those on the right are exchanged with those on the left, and the left with the right.[364]

They surge upward until they reach a certain priest, revealed from the day that the world was created. When they reach there, the High Priest emerges and blesses that calyx. Once the blessing goes out from there—from within Ancient One, Eldest of Elders, [48c] Origin of All Origins—dew of bdellium pours forth, flowing onto the head of the priest; and he fills that calyx. Once filled, he fills sides corresponding to the six days of the week.[365]

When dew descends from the left side and bdellium congeals, it transforms—taking on the aspect of bdellium or jewel. All legions are nourished by it every day, and some by night. Those of the daytime eat in a certain way, while those of the night eat in another. Those of the night are called Smashers of Mountains and Boulders. They gather from midnight until the sun prevails; but once the sun arrives, they cease gathering. Those of the day are called "members of the household," hidden ones of the palace—they gather only in the morning. When morning arrives, each and every one gathers as is fitting for him.[366]

There are others who gather at nighttime—each and every one of them fittingly. Of those at night is written *in the morning there was a layer of dew* (Exodus 16:13), since these would cause the dew of manna to stream from their own portion to lower ones. This manna had no color, nor had it congealed. Of those in the morning is written *In the morning sow your seed* (Ecclesiastes 11:6). They would cause the dew of manna to stream to lower ones—infusing manna with color, sweetness, and honey.[367]

Of the nighttime ones is written *At evening you shall know* (Exodus 16:6); and they would cause the dew of manna to stream all at once. If one retained some of theirs until morning—*it bred worms and stank* (ibid., 20).[368]

Three sides are engraved here, corresponding to the threefold היום... היום... היום (*ha-yom... ha-yom... ha-yom*), *today... today... today* (Exodus 16:25). Three *he*s—*he, he, he*—each carrying three letters, becoming twelve, like the twelve hours of the day. They are all one, all constituting a day. They are three Sabbaths, all constituting one day: Sabbath of the night, Sabbath of the day, and Sabbath of the evening. Three meals correspond to them: nighttime meal, daytime meal, and evening meal.[369]

Nighttime meal—before sanctification of the day, all troops are arrayed. Three suzerains plunge into rivers of balsam, bathing in a channel of hewn roses. They proceed

to a river of fire, rising upward when they emerge. Upon ascending to the white side, the roses are rinsed—providing testimony regarding the Sabbath of creation. The nighttime angels are all noble—stationed on one side, but fanning out to six sides.[370]

When the day is on the verge of sanctification, the sound of the shofar stretches from above to below; that sound is the portion of the people of Israel. There is no holiness until that sound is heard; and then it is known that the day has been sanctified.[371]

Sandalfon—Nazirite and ascetic—is crowned with his engraved crowns, inscribed with letters in permutations of one, two, three, four, five, six. These are the letters: דמת הנך איק בכר גלש... (*alef yod qof, bet kaf resh, gimmel lamed shin, dalet mem tav, he nun* final *kaf*...).[372]

Then comes Bo'el, Master of Elixirs—called Raphael, of whom is said אל נא רפא נא (*El na repha na*), *God, please, heal, please*' (Numbers 12:13), the prayer uttered by the Master's trusted one; this very place cured Miriam. *Na na* (*Please, please*) equals Bo'el when added to the inscribed letters *ADNY. Bet vav alef lamed*—this is Bo'el, Master of Elixirs, healing all the legions, removing from them the caliginous sheen that is so close on all other days.[373]

At that moment, two celestial spirits are aroused: one from the side of light, and one from the side of darkness. They are Michael and Gabriel, engraved for sixty myriads of troops who rule over that night. They are posted—one on the right and one on the left—and tables are prepared for each and every one, after viewing all the tables below in a certain known palace.[374]

All heavenly legions have distinctive posts on that night; and each and every one is majestic and esteemed in his place above all those other troops—officers appointed under his command. From among those troops, two supernal ones emerge, grasping a table—one from the right side and one from the left. Any table that is not offered

between [48d] these two is not deemed a Sabbath table, nor is it a table before the holy King.[375]

When a women and her husband rejoice, the table is crowned. When this table is offered up—with six loaves of that manna on one side and six loaves on the other—this is a table that is wreathed with its crowns. The two who lift up the table must be vigilant to prevent mixing of the six loaves of this side with the six of that side. When this table is brought before the most majestic and esteemed of them all, he takes one from this side and one from that side, and recites a blessing over them. Then each one says to his legions, "זה (*Zeh*), *This, is the table that is before YHVH*" (Ezekiel 41:22)—זה (*zeh*), *This*—twelve.[376]

Over each and every table, three ministers are appointed—with a supernal spirit above them—delighting in the joy. Uriel journeys with his legions to all those tables. Sixty angels taste a morsel from each and every one, saying המוציא (*ha-motsi*), "Who brings forth [bread]," blessing the blessed Holy One.[377]

If one partakes with gusto, there is a boost of energy to the supernal gusto—spirit that rules over them, who raises light joyously.[378]

Come and see: Just as there are angels—Jewish demons—who eat as humans do, so are there other supernal ones, above, above, who eat and drink from the radiance of *Shekhinah*, in whom they delight. This is as they have said: the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads, basking in the radiance of *Shekhinah*—this is true eating![379]

One letter shines, above, above—letter *yod*; it shines, illuminating all the legions, but it is neither known nor revealed. Below this one, five letters glow—spreading out over all the troops: they are א ל ה י ם (*E l o h i m*). א (*Alef*) rotates and rests upon one legion.[380]

Come and see: On the Sabbath, one is required to rejoice during the day and night. He should adorn his table, providing joy for those above and below.[381]

Come and see: When one comes home from the synagogue, holy angels accompany him on this side and angels on that side—with *Shekhinah* above them all, like a mother hovering over her children. At that moment, *A thousand may fall at your side; ten thousand, at your right…. You but look with your eyes…. For you, YHVH is your refuge…. No evil will befall you…* (Psalms 91:7–10).[382]

All this occurs if a person enters his home with happiness, receiving visitors joyfully. When *Shekhinah* and the angels see the candelabrum lit, the table set, and man and his wife rejoicing, at such a moment *Shekhinah* says, "This one is mine—*Israel, in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3)!"[383]

But if not, *Shekhinah* departs—and Her angels with Her. Evil impulse arrives with his forces, cleaving to them. He says, "This one belongs to me and my forces!" At once, he dwells upon him, befouling him. *Yod* and *he* abandon them, leaving fire with fire.[384]

His food, too, is impure. Of this is written *Do not desire delicacies* (Proverbs 23:6) of the *evil eye* (ibid.). His table is full of *filthy vomit* (Isaiah 28:8)—and there is no filth other than the evil impulse, which is impure. Of this they have taught, "If one comes to purify himself, they assist him; if one comes to defile himself, they open the door for him."[385]

Come and see: Holy angels and impure angels accompany a person wherever he goes. If a man is virtuous, holy angels join with him, guarding him wherever he goes, as is written: *For His angels He will command for you, to guard you on all your ways* (Psalms 91:11).[386]

But if not, the holy angels abandon him; and foul angels rule over him, ushering him to Hell. At such a time: *I have called, but none responds* (Isaiah 50:2)—at the time of his distress. Further, when impure spirit or malady prevails over him, or Gentiles reign over him: *You have screened Yourself off with a cloud*, [49a] *that no prayer may pass through* (Lamentations 3:44); *his very prayer is loathsomeness* (Proverbs 28:9).[387]

Alternatively: *Happy is one who provides succor to the downtrodden; on the day of evil YHVH will deliver him* (Psalms 41:2). *But if he holds fast to My stronghold, that he may make peace with Me. Let him make peace with Me* (Isaiah 27:5). Come and see: One is called downtrodden if he has nothing of his own, not asking for a penny from anyone—he is unseen, his distress concealed from all. But in his time of distress he quarrels with heaven, complaining, "Am I a greater sinner than any other man in the world? One man has great wealth—his house is full of gold and silver—while I don't have even a penny in the world! I have no bread to eat, nor clothes to wear," persisting to the point of sinning before the blessed Holy One. But whoever holds fast to His refuge and gives him charity *may make peace with Me. Let him make peace with Me*.[388]

Come and see: Whoever is indigent and transgresses before the blessed Holy One, the blessed Holy One does not deem it a sin, since such a person is not in his right mind. From where do we know this? From Job.[389]

When the blessed Holy One said to Satan, "[*But wisdom*]—מאין (*me-ayin*), *from where, does it come?* (Job 28:20), *Have you noticed My servant Job?* (ibid. 2:3)," Satan replied, "Is there anyone in the world who—if His master bestowed upon him silver, gold, jewels, children, and good things in the world—would be wicked?"[390]

He said, "*Here, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not reach your hand"* (ibid. 1:12). He delivered him into Satan's hands; and the latter slaughtered his children, leaving him with nothing. Afterward, Satan came back and said, "*Touch his bone and his flesh"* (ibid. 2:5). The blessed Holy One replied, saying, *"Here, he is in your hand—but spare his life"* (ibid., 6).[391]

At this juncture, Job became irrational, saying, "*Is it good for you to oppress…* (Job 10:3)? הטוב (*Ha-tov*), *Is this good*—that you oppress me! My father and mother fashioned my body; and You joined them in partnership,

infusing *nefesh* and *neshamah* within me. The *nefesh* is Yours, as You said: *but spare his nefesh* (ibid. 2:6), but as for the body that my father and mother fashioned for me, You said, 'Do with him as you wish.' *Is this good*—that You oppress me!"[392]

Alternatively, *Happy is one who considers the downtrodden* (Psalms 41:2). What is the meaning of *downtrodden*? A man who dies without sons. His soul departs at the time that he passes from the world; see what is proclaimed of him: *Hand to hand, evil will not go unpunished* (Proverbs 11:21). But if he leaves behind a son in the world, and someone takes him and teaches him Torah, *he will make peace with Me* (Isaiah 27:5), and *on the day of evil YHVH will deliver him* (Psalms 41:2).[393]

Come and see: There was a man who traveled to the mountain region of Qardunya—he and two others with him. He saw craters with fiery fissures—spewing smoke—and he heard a man moaning, "Woe, woe!" He remarked, "This must be one of the chambers of Hell."[394]

He slept. In his dream he saw a man with a bundle of thistles on his shoulders. Two angels from Hell kindled the bundle from below; it ignited, and he shrieked. The two holy angels—messengers of the heavenly magistrate who judged him—admonished him, "You neglected the blessed Holy One and His angels who guarded you in this world and the world that is coming; instead, you obeyed the desires of the thistles—wicked ones—who come from the side of Samael and the serpent. The thistles will scorch you."[395]

He asked that sinner from Hell, "Who are you?"[396]

He replied, "I am a Jewish sinner, but the officers of Hell won't tell me my name. Three times a day they punish me, and twice at night."[397]

He asked him, "Do you know the name of your locale?"

"Upper Galilee," he replied.

"And did you leave a son behind?"

“I did leave a child. I was a butcher; and on account of the many crimes I committed long ago, I am judged for my mouth, legs, and hands. The angel who is appointed over graves tells me while I am being judged, ‘Woe to one who has been adjured to fulfill the Torah and swore falsely! Woe to the skull that never put on tefillin! Woe to hands that dandled worldly trifles! [49b] Woe to legs that walked amid worldly frivolities!’[398]

“When they would flog me with the rebel’s lashes, I confessed all that I had done. My soul came, along with the angel appointed over it, and they submitted a writ, listing all I had done. My soul testified with the angel; and they said, *By the word of two witnesses or three witnesses shall the one who dies be put to death* (Deuteronomy 17:6). Of this is written *From her who lies in your bosom guard the doors of your mouth* (Micah 7:5). Who is this? The soul, for she testifies about a person at the time of death.”[399]

The man awoke from his sleep, and traveled to the Upper Galilee. He asked a man, “Have you seen a child, the son of a butcher who died at such-and-such a time?”

He replied, “The child you seek spends his time at the slaughterhouse—he is wicked like his father! May such-and-such happen to him, his father, and to the nursemaid who nursed him!”[400]

He went to a study hall and heard a child reciting, “*If you seek it like silver*… (Proverbs 2:4).”[401]

He proceeded to the slaughterhouse and saw the child sporting with the youths there. He said to him, “My son, come with me”; and the child went with him. The man clothed him, and handed him over to a particular rabbi who taught him Torah until the child grew up and learned to read Torah. He trained him to chant the *haftarah* in the synagogue and to pray, until he had learned to read from the Torah. He became ever more wise, and came to be called “Rabbi.”[402]

The dead man—father of the child, the one who was being punished—came in a dream to the sage and said, “Rabbi, as you have consoled me, so should the blessed Holy One console you. When my son chanted the *haftarah* in the congregation, I was released from judgment. When he moved on to the Prayer and recited *Qaddish*, they tore up my decree completely. And when he became wise, they bestowed upon me a portion in the Garden of Eden—the portion referred to as a portion in the world that is coming, the portion given to each and every righteous one on his own. And they escorted me to be with the righteous in their academy. When he became wiser yet and they called him ‘Rabbi,’ they crowned me with the crowns bestowed upon the righteous. I was provided with food from that which benefits them—from the glow of the *Shekhinah*, as is said: ‘The righteous sit with their crowns on their heads, basking in the radiance of *Shekhinah*.’ And anyone who benefits from the radiance of the *Shekhinah*, it is as if he had eaten and drunk.[403]

“It is on account of you, Rabbi, that I merited all this glory! Happy is your portion, for it is on account of this that you shall have a more elevated portion in this world and in the world that is coming! Happy is one who merits to leave a child in the world!”

DOCTRINE OF THE EIGHTEEN THOUSAND WORLDS[404]

Rabbi Shim'on says, "Before the blessed Holy One created His world, there was only He, and His name sealed within Him. It arose in His Will to create the world. When it arose in the Will, a hidden point rotated, and its boundaries rotated within its palace. An emanation emanated on three sides, but no farther.[405]

"From the midst of this point, three points shot out as one; two were emitted straight—in one aspect—and one below. The point that had emitted these three, entered into and was concealed in the middle; before entering, it ascended and was treasured away.[406]

"When those three points shot out, skipping from within, a single Lamp emerged from within the Concealed of Concealed—known and not known, hidden and not hidden. It meted out a concealed emanation from this point to that point. Points spread out within the force of the Lamp—measuring one thousand worlds that no eye has seen—from this point to that point. Two points fused; between one point and the other—one thousand worlds.[407]

"The Lamp meted out one thousand from within the second point until a point below, producing a ray with an extension of one thousand other worlds—all the worlds concealed. These are the two thousand years of the Torah's existence before the world was created. Then the Torah—concealed point in the middle—entered, consummating this side and that [49c] side. Thus, there were three points on this side and three points on that side.[408]

"After this was accomplished, two points were emitted, skipping from one point to another—shining light—one point clothed in the other. Skipping from this other concealed point is another point, one clothed in the other.[409]

“Concealed point that created all struck. Since it stands in the middle, it emitted another point—column that stands in the middle between these two points that shot out, garments for the concealed ones.[410]

“Up to now: two concealed points, which were emanated and created from the midst of a hidden point, fashioned this artifact by means of that concealed point. The point below that was fused with those two emitted—like the supernal point—two points below, garments from those points, as we have stated.[411]

“That point is the essence of all. Emitted and skipping from it is another point that stands in the middle, between these two points below.[412]

“Up to now: these points are garments for supernal points, fittingly. Those six points that emanated from the midst of the three concealed points are six in the point that is the essence of all, which is complete on all sides.[413]

“These points—their garments are six. Each one emits two; and each enters within the middle, becoming clothed within the two points. The latter become garments for the point from which they emerged.[414]

“Even though we have said that they are six, four of those points emanated—each and every one—two points within which to be concealed and garbed, yielding eight points, garments for the four points. They are the garments for the supernal concealed ones.[415]

“Up to now—points tracing the supernal world. Once the points were traced out, the *Botsina* shot out, ramifying an emanation, meting out one thousand between one point and another. Between each and every point there is a measurement and a ramification of the Lamp. In these points, eight thousand worlds—eight points that are fused with those emanations—disseminate; and they are called eight thousand hidden worlds. They are emanations when revealed and points concealing sixteen thousand worlds.[416]

“From these six garbed points there are two in the center of the points—for each, one thousand worlds.[417]

“These are the eighteen thousand worlds through which the blessed Holy One travels every day. Each and every world is concealed and treasured away from one another. Of them all is written *height upon height keeps guard; and still higher heights over them* (Ecclesiastes 5:7), and *No eye has seen, O God, but You* (Isaiah 64:3).”[418]

PARASHAT BE-HAR פרשת בהר

“On the Mountain” (Leviticus 25:1–26:2)

Rabbi Shim’on opened, “*So I may endow* אוהבי (*ohavai*), *my lovers, with substance and fill their storehouses* (Proverbs 8:21). What is the meaning of *ohavai, my lovers*? This alludes to Abraham, of whom is said *seed of Abraham* אוהבי (*ohavi*), *My lover* (Isaiah 41:8).”[419]

Rabbi El’azar said, “But Father, Father! Ishmael and the sons of Keturah came from him!”[420]

Rabbi Shim’on was dumbfounded. At that moment Elijah came, and said to him, “Holy Spark! Heavenly Lamp! Rabbi El’azar has spoken well, for *my lovers* are only from the seed of Jacob, as is written: *yet I have loved Jacob* (Malachi 1:2).”[421]

Rabbi Shim’on exulted and kissed Rabbi El’azar on the head. He said to him, “My son, if your heart is wise, my heart, too, rejoices. Rise, my son, and the mystery of this verse will be revealed!”

He trembled, and rose to his feet.

Rabbi Shim’on said, “*So I may endow my lovers with substance*. What is the meaning of יש (*yesh*), *substance*? Mystery of יובל (*yovel*), Jubilee, and שמיטה (*shemittah*), Sabbatical Year—the blessed Holy One did not bequeath them to other nations, but rather only to the holy people. When Israel guards the Sabbatical Year fittingly, souls of the righteous delight in the Garden of Eden, returning to be

renewed. Of them is said *They who await YHVH* [49d] *shall renew their strength* (Isaiah 40:31).[422]

"Further, the blessed Holy One will immerse all those souls in the River of Fifty that is in the Upper Garden of Eden, called River of Fire.[423]

"In the mystery of Sabbatical Year and Jubilee, the blessed Holy One receives the prayers of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, Zilpah, and Bilhah, for all of them were inscribed with *he—he* alluding to Sabbatical Year and Jubilee. When Rachel saw that Sabbatical Year and Jubilee were alluded to in Leah's name, and that she herself was not inscribed with *he*, at once she said, '*Here is my slavegirl* בלהה (*Bilhah*), *Bilhah* (Genesis 30:3), who has two.'[424]

"The end of יובל (*yovel*), Jubilee, is at the beginning of the name of לאה (*Leah*), Leah, and at the end of the name רחל (*Raḥel*), Rachel."[425]

PARASHAT NASO פרשת נשא

"Count" (Numbers 4:21–7:89)

[50a] *Thus shall you bless the children of Israel* (Numbers 6:23).

Come and see: When the prayer leader recites his prayer and is about to utter the priestly blessing, he must direct his intention—actually—with heartfelt desire, to bless the holy people. For if his deed and words are tied in a bond of unity, then upper ones and lower ones will be blessed.[426]

Then the prayer leader is required to say "*May YHVH bless you* (ibid., 24)" toward the sanctuary. "*And protect you* (ibid.)"—looking toward his right side, to draw down first a filament of love upon the holy people. Afterward he says, "*May YHVH shine* (ibid., 25)" toward the sanctuary.

"And be gracious to you (ibid.)"—and he should look toward his left side, to join it with the right, since the source of blessing is from the right side. Then the entire left side vanishes, and there is no damage at all. Then, "*May YHVH lift up His face and grant you peace* (ibid., 26)." This is a perfect prayer.[427]

Woe to one who comes to entice his Lord with a distant heart, with no fervor, as is said: ויפתוהו (*Va-yfattuhu*), *They enticed Him, with their mouths, and with their tongues they lied to Him, and their heart was not firm with Him* (Psalms 78:36–37). This applies to a prayer leader who looks first to his left side in order to arouse the side of Judgment first; because of him there is rupture, not joining.[428]

For unification through prayer and blessing depends upon speech and utterance from the mouth. Everything depends upon the essence of the deed—one who does not know the essence of the deed, his worship is no worship. And if he spoils the deed, the utterance lacks a place for blessing to rest: his prayer is no prayer, and this man will have blemished realms above and below.[429]

Woe to the one who ruins his prayer, worship of his Lord! Of him is written *When you come to appear before My face*, [*who asked this of you*,] *to trample My courts…. Do not persist in bringing* [*futile oblations*]… *Assemblies with iniquity, I cannot abide* (Isaiah 1:12–13).

PARASHAT BALAQ פרשת בלק

"Balak" (Numbers 22:2–25:9)

[55a][430] *I see him, but not now. I gaze on him, but not soon. A star marches forth from Jacob; a* *I see him*—regarding the event of redemption for the fourth. *But not now*—rather at the end of days.[432]

meteor arises from Israel (Numbers 24:17).[431]

Six days comprise the world. On the fourth day we saw that the lights inhering in it were eliminated and extinguished—sun, moon, stars, and constellations treasured away. Present there in the act of creation, and from there they vanished on the day of the fourth millennium.[433]

Rabbi Shim'on wept, saying, "Woe that the exile continues! Who can withstand it?"

He replied, "Woe, Rabbi! Woe, Rabbi! If you only knew how much convulsion and chaos the blessed Holy One wrought among all those firmaments when He issued His decree, delivering the people of Israel into the hand of that maidservant, in bondage under the hand of Edom! When writs were being written in the heavens, before being sealed with the signet of the King, the blessed Holy One summoned all the troops in heaven. And He called for Gabriel—carrying scribal implements on his loins—charging him, 'Delay those writs until they are sealed. Let Me weep for my children; let Me deliver a eulogy and mourn. I adjure you, all forces of the heavens: Leave Me, and do not steel yourselves to comfort Me,' as is said: *Therefore I say, 'Look away from me, let me weep bitterly, press not to comfort me for the ruin of the young woman, my poor people.'* (Isaiah 22:4).[434]

"He pounded and stomped in the heaven of *Aravot*, causing cracks and gaping rents. He opened, grieving, 'My children, My children! Beloved of my inmost parts! I raised you, and carried you like a father carries his child. I taught you to revere Me, and made you sovereign over all the other nations of the world. You sinned before Me with numerous transgressions, but I ignored them because you were so precious and beloved to me. My children, My children! I will call out to the four corners of the world and adjure them on your behalf.[435]

“‘O East, East, I adjure you! If my children are dispersed among you, examine their forms and faces. How have they been altered and mired by the afflictions imposed upon them in your domain? Wail and ululate on their behalf—protect them![436]

“‘My children, My children! When you were in My home, in the bosom of your Mother, abounding in pleasures and delights, you paid Me no heed. My children, My children, what can I do for you? I have issued a decree by oath, but you and I are exiled! Moses, faithful shepherd, how can you ignore my holy flocks that I consigned to your hands?[437]

“‘O East, East, arouse toward Moses! Cry and wail for My children! Let wailing and eulogies be heard at once until I hear them—brimming with them along with you.

“‘My children, My children! Beloved of My soul! How [55c] do you walk in iron chains, hands bound tightly behind you? Children who grew up with delights, more precious than gold and sapphires! My children, My children! Holy pious ones, how you have fallen into the hands of foreigners without compassion. Holy flesh of your bodies has been hoisted up, profaned in the markets and streets. My children, My children! Woe unto you and unto Me! Then He tore His purple robe, as is written: [*YHVH*] *has done what He devised* (Lamentations 2:17).[438]

“‘O South, South, I adjure you! When My children are dispersed among you, watch over them—how their faces are blackened and their strength sapped among the nations. O South, South, I adjure you! Arouse toward Abraham My beloved, and ask him, “How have My children fallen and been dispersed among their enemies? Weep and ululate on their behalf!” O South, south, I adjure you! Protect My children—beloved of My soul—when they are dispersed among you.[439]

“‘O North, North, arouse with a voice of weeping, ululation, mourning, and agony toward My children! Ask

the one bound on My altar, “How do his children fare, and how did they fall by the sword?” Do not tell nor report this to Jacob, lest he overturn the world in a second![440]

“‘O West, West, arouse toward the groaning of the wounded and the mighty battles of My children! Arouse toward My love—My turtledove, My pure one. How do Her children fare, and how have they been dispersed among the various sides?[441]

“‘My sister, My daughter, My love! My love, beloved of My soul, what shall we do for Our children? What will they do? My love, My sister, I say to You, if You desire, go. You are four-sided—let Your wings spread out on four sides. I adjure You, My daughter—My only one—go with them, and do not abandon them. Cover them throughout the four corners of the earth; if not, they will perish!’[442]

“What can I tell you, Rabbi? When Assembly of Israel heard this, She lifted up Her voice, and eighteen thousand worlds shook. The blessed Holy One was with Her, and then *A voice is heard on a height—wailing, bitter weeping—Rachel weeping for her children* (Jeremiah 31:15).[443]

“As for the blessed Holy One, *YHVH God of Hosts called on that day for weeping and mourning* (Isaiah 22:12). Whoever saw such convulsion in all the firmaments! Whoever saw such chaos and mourning, such that all the hosts of heaven thought that all the worlds would be overturned![444]

“The blessed Holy One said to Assembly of Israel, ‘My daughter, my only one. Go, spread Yourself over them, live with Our children.’

“She replied, ‘Master of the Universe, I shall not go. After I raised them, adorned them, and honored them, shall I watch their enemies vanquish them, while You discard us there!?’

“So the blessed Holy One swore to Her that He would sustain Her and free Israel, as is said: *Thus says YHVH: Restrain your voice from weeping… There is hope for your*

future…. children will return to their land (Jeremiah 31:16–17). Upon hearing this, She departed.[445]

"After She had left His presence, the blessed Holy One proclaimed to all the forces in heaven: *Alas, the gold is dulled* (Lamentations 4:1), as well as the entire acrostic dirge. The blessed Holy One alone recited this to Her—and afterward made a wreath of love with that dirge. Then, the writs were sealed.[446]

"Now I shall return to the portion of the generation of Balaam—the generation of the exile continues.[447]

"*I see him, but not now* (Numbers 24:17). To whom does this refer? To the one of whom it is said *he is no more* (Jeremiah 31:15), when He comes to take note of the Doe. *But not now* (Numbers 24:17)—and not soon. I gaze on him, but not soon—'I look upon him, but not now; rather in the distant future.'[448]

"*A star marches forth from Jacob* (ibid.). Oh, Rabbi! Oh, Rabbi! How many hidden mysteries are contained here!"[449]

He opened, saying, "*YHVH Elohim cast a deep slumber on Adam, and he slept* (Genesis 2:21). When the blessed Holy One created Primordial Adam, He created Him with two faces, and they were joined together as one, with no separation. Why? As is written: *male and female He created them*… (ibid. 5:2), without separation. It is not written *created him*, but rather *created them*, since when they were created, they were as one, [55d]—this equal to that. What did the blessed Holy One do to him? He sawed him, separating the female from him. He adorned Her with diverse adornments, enhancing Her with diverse enhancements, and garbing Her with diverse garments. Where [did He adorn Her]? He adorned Her in the Garden of Eden.[450]

"With how many enhancements did He enhance Her? Seventy—seventy faces of Torah. With how many adornments did He adorn her? Thirteen adornments—

thirteen attributes through which the Torah is interpreted. With how many garments did He clothe her? Six garments —six orders of the Mishnah, with six faces. The blessed Holy One bestowed all of these adornments and all of these enhancements and all of these garments upon her in the Garden of Eden, and then *He brought her to Adam* (Genesis 2:22).[451]

"And where was *Adam*? At the Point of Zion, for the Temple is there; and He took them from there, and deposited them in the Garden of Eden. There He blessed them with bridegroom's blessings.[452]

"This is the mystery of *A star marches forth from Jacob* (Numbers 24:17)—He adorned and enhanced that star that He took from Jacob. It is on account of Her that the one who will be revealed, will be revealed. This is why He came to her and drew down for Her from above. *A meteor arises from Israel* (ibid.)—Tree of Life. *Arises*, as is said, *I will establish My covenant* (Genesis 6:18).[453]

"When this transpires, *it smashes the brow of Moab* (Numbers, ibid.)—all those aspects that had united with the Lower Tree will cease and be removed from Her. Then, *Adam said, 'This time'* (Genesis 2:23)—this is the time of delights and pleasures, for reveling as one, and not like the other periods in which the wicked side had united between us. Now there is no blending of the *Sitra Aḥra* in our midst, but rather *bone of my bones* (ibid.), with no other admixture of wickedness.[454]

"*Bone of my bones*—light of the speculum that shines—actually! *Flesh of my flesh* (ibid.)—garment, from that very garment that clothes My celestial light. *This shall be called Woman* (ibid.)—with supreme sovereignty over the entire world, never ceasing. Then, *It will crush and consume all these kingdoms, and will itself endure forever* (Daniel 2:44).[455]

“I see him, but not now (Numbers 24:17). This vision that I will behold is poised for me to see and to join with as one. *But not now* (ibid.) in the Babylonian exile, in that house that was built by those who ascended from the exile. *I gaze on him* (ibid.)—I am ready to gaze upon Him face-to-face. *But not soon*—rather, in the last house, since in neither this one nor that one did I have comfort, intimacy, or union, fittingly.[456]

“Woe, Rabbi! Woe, Rabbi! How arduous and prolonged this is! How many torments at the ready, for use by the enemies of Israel in exile! How many beasts reigning, roaring, tearing Israel—its prey—apart at each and every moment, until the end of days.[457]

“At that time, at the end of days, at the appointed hour of the day, at the time of day when the sun shines, in the sixth day, at the designated time according to the number of years when the Jubilee and the Sabbatical year occur together, which is two hundred and seventy-four into the sixth year—a voice will arouse from the height of the heights of the heavens, a sad and bitter voice, one that has had no match since the day that the worlds were created. That voice will be muted—whispered, bitter, and sad—falling and rising, rising and falling.[458]

“And this is what it says: ‘I had a beloved Doe from ancient days; She has slipped away, and yet My love for Her endures. I remember Her since the seal of Her image is sealed upon My heart, and sealed upon My arm—My love for Her still fierce within Me, the sparks of its flames blazing within Me.’[459]

“At that time, He will wail three agonizing cries, one after the other. Firmaments will tremble and all the worlds will shake, until the three howls will be heard by the sea serpent. It will flee four hundred thousand parasangs to a sea creature in the sea. Traps will be laid, and nets spread out to haul it out of the sea. It will be brought [56a] to the heavenly academy, and all difficulties and all questions

posed there will be clarified. It will be detained there for one hundred and fifty days.[460]

"The blessed Holy One will usher in all the hosts of heaven and all members of the academy, with Him above them all. They will present the sea creature before Him, and He will loosen three braids from its neck and lift up those lovers. Then they will return the sea creature to the place that it was captured. Those lovers will enter a unique palace called Love, and will be treasured away there.[461]

"The blessed Holy One adjures the forces and the members of the two academies that they should all go forth to hear the voice of the beloved, for He longs to hear Her voice in their midst.[462]

"At that time, diverse torments will be aroused against the holy people, heaped up, causing great anguish. They will shriek, cry after cry, tears upon tears; and they will arouse Her, and She will hear the call of Her children.

"The blessed Holy One calls out, saying, 'This is My Doe, My love, My dove, My perfect one who dwells in the gardens.' She used to sit only in the hiddenness of the inner stairway, as is said: *All the princess's honor is within* (Psalms 45:14). But now in the gardens, exposed—like a mother running after her child in the markets and in the city streets, fearful lest he be disgraced.[463]

"'My Doe, My love, My mother, behold! All the companions of the two academies are here; the companions of the academies are listening to Your voice. Let Me hear, for I long to hear Your voice. How long it has been that I have not heard your voice and have not known Your whereabouts!'

"At that time, the entire world will be in upheaval—people against people, nation against nation. One who is unfit will be brought to govern; foreign nations with foreign languages will come with him—people who have no sense of justice nor standards of governance. How many wars will they plot! Soft-spoken, with subtle speech, his aims will be

fulfilled. He will rule, devising diverse corrupt plans. He will execute vile decrees against the unique nation—suffering upon suffering imposed upon that one nation. Then the blessed Holy One will be invigorated, and will console the Doe with various forms of solace. He will encourage Her, raising Her up from the dust—He and no other—with the two academies remaining at Her side.[464]

"Three kings will arouse—on three sides of the world—against this nation. And the king who had ruled with a soft voice will govern now with exceeding fury, trials, and severity against the holy people.[465]

"In the third month, on the fourth of the month, at nine and a half hours, all the members of the academy who were with the Doe will travel to the grave of the shepherd, faithful member of the household, emitting three sounds toward him. When the sun is gathered in from the world, and his crypt opens up, the members of the academies will seek to enter; but permission will not be granted, and they will all depart for their locales. She enters, and whatever emerges, emerges. She finds Moses sitting there and reading—a lamp burning before him, surrounded by fragrances and aromas.[466]

"When he sees that She has entered, he rises and they join together—this one with that one—voices arousing in the highest heights of the firmaments. The blessed Holy One hears, and enters the Palace of Love; He lifts up the lovers from there, and opens up [the cave] for them. The Messiah is aroused that night, appearing there with them; and they review secrets of the Torah all that night in Moses' cave.[467]

"When first light rises, the Messiah departs; but Moses and *Shekhinah* remain on that day as on the day of *Shavu'ot*. *Shekhinah* ascends the mountain; and three blasts are heard: one corresponding to Abraham, one to Isaac, and one to Moses and Jacob. This is as is written: *Ascend a lofty mountain, O herald of joy to Zion; raise your voice with*

power…. have no fear (Isaiah 40:9). *Raise… raise… announce* (ibid.)—[56b] *teru'ah, teqi'ah*, and *teru'ah* as one. *Raise*—with the force of *teru'ah*; *raise…. have no fear*—*teqi'ah*; *announce*—*teru'ah, teqi'ah, teru'ah* as one. This is called תרועה שופר (*shofar teru'ah*), *a blasting shofar* (Leviticus 25:9)—shofar that derives from that upper *teru'ah*.[468]

"[This one is called] Small Shofar, since there is another called Great Shofar. Small Shofar—called Shofar that Travels through the Tremolos of the Embouchure, as is written: *the blast of the shofar will travel* (Exodus 19:16). The other shofar is treasured away and concealed, and it does not travel. But this small one here is like the one on the day of *Shavu'ot*—this is the one that arouses Torah on the day of *Shavu'ot*.[469]

"With the arousal from this shofar—arousing with *teru'ah, teqi'ah*, and *teru'ah*—the patriarchs will be aroused from within the cave, flying with the wind and coming toward Her. On account of that blast, numerous sinners in the Holy Land will die, and will be plucked from the world. On that day, prayers of Israel—wherever they may be—will ascend before the Holy King. The patriarchs will arrive as one and stand upon that mountain, Moses ascending alongside them. He will gaze upon the patriarchs and they will gaze upon him; and then they will all enter into the cave of Moses. The Messiah arouses toward them, and they all band together on that day.[470]

"On that day, ten tribes will be aroused to wage war at the four ends of the earth, with the Messiah who was anointed on their behalf. He will be anointed by a righteous priest, accompanied by seven faithful shepherds. This Messiah is from the tribe of Ephraim, from the seed of Jeroboam son of Nebat—son of Abijah, who died in his youth. On the day that he died, a son was born to him; and he was taken from the house of Jeroboam to the desert. One hundred and seventy men journeyed there, all righteous

ones from the tribe of Ephraim who were not implicated in the sin of Jeroboam.[471]

"From that son of Abijah sprouted this Messiah, and of this is written *All of Israel shall lament for him and bury him* (1 Kings 14:13). This prophecy was sealed for that particular time, but also contains a prophecy for the future: *for he alone of Jeroboam shall come to a grave, inasmuch as in him alone in the house of Jeroboam is a good thing found before YHVH God of Israel* (ibid.)—this is the Messiah—*a good thing found before YHVH*.[472]

"Once the patriarchs become aware that the blessed Holy One has summoned His Doe, jubilation upon jubilation will transpire that day. But in the land to the north and in the kingdom of the south—diverse torments upon torments will be aroused on that day against the people of Israel; but their prayers will be received with favor. So in the evening of that day, *Shekhinah* will return to the House, the Messiah to his station, and the patriarchs to their cave.[473]

"*Shekhinah* will journey to Moses for seventy days. At the end of seventy days, the cries of Israel will rise up before the Holy King—regarding their afflictions in all corners of the earth. One community in the south will be razed and laid waste, with five truly righteous ones martyred among them.[474]

"Then, thirty-two days after that community will have been slaughtered, the blessed Holy One will clothe Himself in jealousy on behalf of the Small Shofar. The Messiah son of Ephraim will spread a canopy; he is like an ox whose horns rise, like horns of the wild ox.[475]

"The Small Shofar will sound *teru'ah, teqi'ah*, and *teru'ah* three times at the top of the mountain, as in ancient days. Then flags of the Messiah will be raised up and a great commotion will descend upon the world with the blasts of the shofar. All the people of the world will hear and see, as is said: *All you who live in the world and inhabit the earth,*

when a flag is raised in the hills, you shall see! And when a ram's horn is blown you shall hear! (Isaiah 18:3).[476]

"Then abominations will be eradicated from the Holy Land. Three battles will be waged by the Ishmaelites against this messiah, but they will come and bow down before the Master of the Universe, at the holy mountain in Jerusalem. These battles will occur in the sixth millennium.[477] [56c]

"In the month of Bul, their enemies will topple; and all abominations remaining in the Holy Land will be eradicated. From there they go on to instigate wars against the world. While they are still battling with the entire world, the Edomites will enter the Holy Land and capture it, ruling over it for twelve months.[478]

"After twelve months, the entire world will shake and shudder. During these times when *Shekhinah* goes back and forth to the cave of Moses, the Messiah will be concealed for nine months, like the months of a pregnant woman. During these nine months—how much pain and torment he endures![479]

"Even so, the blessed Holy One will increase his torment, charging into the byways of a certain tree. He has a holy tree—great and powerful. Into its seventy branches He conveys the attributes of the diagonals; and He takes the seventy archons that surround the seventy branches of the tree among the divisions of diagonals. Then it will be discovered that they had oppressed excessively by a measure and a half. In response, He demotes them from every realm and branch.[480]

"How many small branches—and not so small—will be broken when those archons are removed, since they had been joined to those branches; in their being pared away, branches broke. Similarly, many multitudes of the holy people will be smashed beneath the feet of the other nations. All those archons will then be passed through the River of Fire, and deprived of their rule.[481]

“Amid all this, the Messiah will suffer pain and travails like those of a woman in labor. Of that time is written *May YHVH answer you on the day of distress* (Psalms 20:2), since its nine verses correspond to the nine months of pregnancy. Seventy words—for seventy years in the sixth millennium he will be born and will rule over the entire world. On account of this, through these nine months, there will be nightly visions from the middle of the night onward of a chariot of fire and fiery horses, beyond the firmament, waging wars, these against those, until morning dawns.[482]

“After these nine months pass, the blessed Holy One will arouse the Messiah and remove him from the Garden of Eden. On the day that he emerges, the whole world will tremble, for everyone in the world will believe that they are about to die.

“Of that day is written *They will enter caves in the rocks and clefts in the cliffs, from the fear of YHVH* (Isaiah 2:19). This alludes to *Shekhinah*—who will be exalted from then onward, Messiah at Her side. *And from the glory of His majesty* (ibid.)—this is the Messiah. *When He rises to terrify the earth* (ibid.), then, *He will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth* (ibid. 11:12)—they will go in the sixtieth year of the sixth millennium, after the blessed Holy One has performed numerous miracles.”[483]

PARASHAT MATTOT פרשת מטות

“Tribes” (Numbers 30:2–32:42)

All the little ones of the women who have not yet known lying with a male (Numbers 31:18).[484]

We have learned there that Rabbi Yehudah said, “The world operates with only two colors, coming from the side of wise-hearted

woman, as is written: *Every woman wise-hearted with her hands spun and brought the threadwork of turquoise and purple* (Exodus 35:25). What did they bring? Turquoise and purple, colors that are included with other colors. This is as is written: *She seeks out wool and flax, and performs with willing hands* (Proverbs 31:13), and it is written: *with her hands spun*. What is the meaning of spun?”[485]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “They spun with judgment and they spun with compassion.”[486]

Rabbi Yitsḥak asked, “Then, why is she called woman?”[487]

He replied, “Because she is encompassed within Judgment and encompassed in Compassion. Come and see: Rabbi El’azar said, ‘Every woman is called judgment until she tastes the taste of compassion. This is as is taught in a *baraita*: “From the side of man comes white; and from the side of woman, red.” Once a woman tastes from the side of white, white prevails.’[488]

“Come and see: Why are the women of the other nations who have lain down with a man forbidden? Since we have learned that there is right and left; Israel and the other nations; Garden of Eden and Hell; this world and the world that is coming. Israel corresponds to Compassion, and the other nations to Judgment. We have learned that if a woman has tasted the taste of Compassion, Compassion triumphs. [56d] But if a woman has tasted the taste of Judgment, Judgment clings to Judgment; and of them is proclaimed *The dogs are greedy; they never know satiety* (Isaiah 56:11). Of this we have learned: A woman who lies with a Gentile is tied to him like a dog. Just as a dog is fiercely impudent in spirit, so too here, Judgment within Judgment is fierce and brazen to all.[489]

“But one who lies with a Jew—of this we have learned, as is written: *But you, the ones clinging to* YHVH אלהיכם (*Eloheikhem*), *your God, are all alive today* (Deuteronomy 4:4). What is the explanation? Because *nishmeta*, the soul, of a Jew

comes from the spirit of Living *Elohim*, as is written: *For ru'aḥ, spirit, envelops before Me* (Isaiah 57:16). We learn this since it is written *before Me*. Therefore, a woman who is a virgin and has not cleaved to Hard Judgment of the other nations, but has cleaved to Israel—Compassion will triumph and she will be fit.[490]

"Come and see: It is written: *The world is built by* חסד (*ḥesed*), *love* (Psalms 89:3). What is *ḥesed?* One of the celestial crowns of the King. The blessed Holy One called a Jewish soul *ḥesed* on condition that it constructs—and does not eradicate love from the world. This is learned from Scripture—*built*. Thus we have learned that one who eradicates love from the world is himself eradicated from the world that is coming. Of this is written *the wife of the dead man shall not be outside* (Deuteronomy 25:5)—[the levir] shall act with love toward the deceased, and building shall be performed, as is written: *The world is built by* חסד (*ḥesed*), *love*."[491] [58d]

PARASHAT KI TETSE פרשת כי תצא

"When You Go Out" (Deuteronomy 21:10–25:19)

When you go out to war against your enemies (Deuteronomy 21:10).[492]

Rabbi Shim'on opened, "*Israel rejects what is good; an enemy shall pursue him* (Hosea 8:3). What is the meaning of *Israel rejects* טוב (*tov*), *what is good*? This is the good impulse, which King Solomon called good, as is written: [טוב (*tov*), *good is*], *a poor but wise boy* (Ecclesiastes 4:13).[493]

"*An enemy shall pursue him*—evil impulse, enemy of the human, since King Solomon called it *enemy*. Indeed, it has many names, as is written: *If your enemy is hungry, feed him* לחם (*leḥem*), *bread* (Proverbs 25:21). This is the holy

Torah, as is written: *Come*, לחמו בלחמי (*laḥamu be-laḥmi*), *battle with my bread-food* (ibid. 9:5). Thus, one must set words of Torah upon himself so that the evil impulse will be smashed inside of him, for there is no attack against the evil impulse without words of Torah. Of this is written *These words that I command you today shall be upon* לבבך (*levavekha*), *your heart* (Deuteronomy 6:6)—upon your two impulses."[494]

Rabbi Yehudah asked him, "The good impulse—why does it need words of Torah?"

He replied, "The good impulse is crowned by them and the evil impulse is subjugated by them. Of this is written *When you go out to war against your enemy* (Deuteronomy 21:10)—this is the evil impulse, which we must charge and confront with words of Torah, to assail it. Then it will be delivered into one's hand, as is said: *YHVH your God give him in your hand and you take him captive* (ibid.)."[495]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Woe, woe—*A slave becoming a king, a scoundrel sated with food* (Proverbs 30:22)—when the good impulse has been taken captive in the hands of the evil impulse, and the latter rules over it.[496]

"*A woman of comely features* (Deuteronomy 21:11)—alluding to the soul, as is said: *a woman who fears YHVH is to be praised* (Proverbs 31:30). For on each and every day, escorts and guides of the souls, and escorts and guides of the evil impulse incite constantly—these against those. All limbs of the body suffer between them, between the soul and the evil impulse.[497]

"*You shall bring her into your house* (Deuteronomy 21:12) for she had been cast out of it—*a slave-girl supplanting her mistress* (Proverbs 30:23). These words have already been established.[498]

"*She shall shave her head, and do her nails* (Deuteronomy, ibid.)—purifying herself from the scum that the serpent infused in her.[499]

"*She shall take off her captive's cloak* (ibid., 13)—garments of impurity and wicked trappings from the sin of

the calf. At first, they had holy garments that they received at Mount Sinai; but when they fashioned the calf, these precious garments were stripped off of them, as is written: *The Children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb onward* (Exodus 33:6).[500]

"*She shall lament for her father and her mother a month of days* (Deuteronomy 21:13)—this alludes to the month of Elul, during which Moses ascended the mountain to plead for mercy before the blessed Holy One, that He might forgive Israel regarding the calf. This is why it is written *for her father and her mother a month of days*—for she had revealed the nakedness of the blessed Holy One and the nakedness of the Torah, as is said: *Your father's nakedness and your mother's nakedness you shall not expose* (Leviticus 18:7). Of this, [David] said *Streams of water my eyes have shed over those who did not observe Your Torah* (Psalms 119:136).[501]

"The people of Israel were distant from the King all that time until Yom Kippur, when Moses descended [59a] from the mountain. The people of Israel were fasting all that day; and so the King cleaved to *Matronita*, as is said: *Afterward you shall come to bed with her, and you shall cohabit with her and she shall become your wife* (Deuteronomy 21:13).[502]

"They established a covenant with the blessed Holy One that they would no longer engage in foreign worship, as is said: *Look, I am about to seal a covenant before all your people…* (Exodus 34:10), and *No molten gods shall you make for yourself* (ibid., 17). Of this [is written] *but you shall certainly not sell her for silver* (Deuteronomy 21:14)—do not lie against your soul for the sake of abominations of silver, as is said: *You shall not make with Me gods of silver and gods of gold, you shall not make* [*them*] *for yourselves* (Exodus 20:20).[503]

"Happy are Israel, for the blessed Holy One decreed a fast for them on that day, as is written: *For every soul that is not afflicted on this very day shall be cut off from her kin*

(Leviticus 23:29)! This is to atone for all their sins, as is written: *For on this day He will effect atonement for you, to purify you of all your sins; before YHVH you will become pure* (Leviticus 16:30).”[504] [59c]

PARASHAT KI TAVO פרשת כי תבא

“When You Enter” (Deuteronomy 26:1–29:8)

Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai fled to the wilderness of Lydda and hid in a cave—he and his son, Rabbi El’azar. A miracle occurred for them—a carob tree sprouted and a spring of water gushed forth. They ate from the carob tree and drank from the waters. Elijah, of blessed memory, visited them twice daily and taught them, without anyone knowing about it.[505]

One day, the sages were in the *beit midrash*, questioning and debating: “The curses of Leviticus allude to the First Temple, while the curses of Deuteronomy allude to the Second Temple. The curses of Leviticus contain promises and the blessed Holy One’s affection for Israel, as is written: *I will remember My covenant with Jacob* (Leviticus 26:42), and *Yet even this, too—when they are in the land of their enemies*, [*I will not reject them*] (ibid., 44). The curses of Deuteronomy contain no promises nor any consolation at all such as are found in the first curses.” And none of them could explain it.[506]

Rabbi Yehudah son of Il’ai rose, saying, “Woe for the absence of Son of Yoḥai! No one [59d] knows his whereabouts; and even if they did, they could not divulge.”[507]

Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Yehudah arose one morning and saw birds flying—a turtledove trailing them. He stood up, saying, “Turtledove! Faithful Turtledove! Since the days of the flood, the form of the holy people has suited you and graced you. Go, serve as my messenger to Son of Yoḥai, wherever he is.” The dove circled around and came before

him. He wrote a note, recording what he had said. The dove arose and took it in its mouth, traveling to Rabbi Shim'on, carrying it under her wing.[508]

Rabbi Shim'on looked at the note and cried—he along with his son Rabbi El'azar. He said, "I weep because of our separation from the companions; and I weep regarding these matters that have not been revealed to them! What will later generations do when they consider this!"[509]

Just then, Elijah, of blessed memory, arrived. He saw him weeping, and said, "I was ready for a different mission, but the blessed Holy One dispatched me to dry your tears. Oh, Rabbi, Rabbi! Now was not the time to reveal these matters to the righteous, but here is what the blessed Holy One explained. The first curses contain thirty-two verses, all corresponding to the paths of Torah. The latter curses contain fifty-three verses, corresponding to the *parashot* and routes of the Torah. In the first exile, from the First Temple, Israel passed along those concealed, secret paths. Their sins were revealed and their end was revealed, along with consolation and promises for them. In the latter exile—after the Second Temple—the people of Israel transgressed against fifty-three portions, revealed paths. Their sins were concealed and their ends were concealed—neither promises nor consolation were written."[510]

Just then, a wind gusted by, separating them, sweeping Elijah up in a wheel of fire. Rabbi Shim'on remained, weeping. He fell asleep at the opening of the cave. Suddenly Elijah, of blessed memory, came, saying, "Arise, Rabbi Shim'on! Wake up from your slumber. Happy is your portion, for the blessed Holy One is concerned for your honor! All the promises and consolations of Israel are written in these curses.[511]

"Go, see how a king loves his son, and even though he curses and lashes him, his deep love endures. When he displays severe wrath, his compassion for him prevails. Similarly, with the blessed Holy One—even though He

curses, His words come from love. In their revealed form they appear to be curses, but they are great boons, because the curses came from love. This contrasts with the first ones, which all derived from harsh judgment. In these there is judgment and love—like a father who loves his son while gripping in his hand a switch for flogging. The child shrieks mightily, creating a din; but the lashes are lessened with love.[512]

"Most severe of all these curses—*What's more, every illness and every plague that is not mentioned in this Scroll of Torah YHVH will hide from you, that would have caused you to be wiped out* (Deuteronomy 28:61). Here are promises of great love from father to son! It is not written יעלה (*ya'aleh*), *will bring* [*upon you*], but rather יעלם (*ya'lem*), *will hide* [*from you*]. He will subdue them and nullify them in a pit—their place—so that they cannot venture forth; rather, they will be subdued and covered in their pit.[513]

"*Until you are wiped out* (ibid.)—which will never, ever happen, for the blessed Holy One took an oath that He would never destroy Israel, and that their memory will endure forever. This is as is written: *so shall your seed and your name stand* (Isaiah 66:22), and *As I live, if the heavens above could be measured*… (Jeremiah 31:37). Since it has been sworn by oath that Israel will never, ever be wiped out, it is fitting that plagues and illnesses should be concealed and covered, never emerging to harm them to the extent of annihilation—that will never, ever happen.[514]

"The end and conclusion of them all is *YHVH will bring you back to Egypt in ships, by a route that I told you, 'You shall not see it again.' There you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male slaves* [60a] *and slavegirls, but there will be no buyer* (Deuteronomy 28:68)—promises and consolations that the blessed Holy One provides to Israel at the end of days! *YHVH will bring you back to Egypt in ships*—a promise to return them, and to perform miracles and signs that the blessed Holy One had enacted in Egypt in

days of yore. This is as is said: *As in the days of your coming out of the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders* (Micah 7:15).[515]

"באניות (*Bo-oniyyot*), *In ships*—but here its meaning is as you have said, expounding it as בעניות (*ba-aniyyut*), *in poverty*, without a coin in one's purse. Everyone in the world is poised to pounce upon Israel, aboard seafaring vessels, intending to annihilate them, but they will all drown in the sea just as was done in olden days, and joy abounded. Here it is written באניות (*bo-oniyyot*), *in ships*; and there it is written באניות רנתם (*bo-oniyyot rinnatam*), *raising their voice in ships* (Isaiah 43:14)—just as joy is there, so is there joy here.[516]

"*By a route which I told you*—since the day that the world was created the might of the blessed Holy One has not been seen in the world, nor the time of favor, other than on that route. *For as you see the Egyptians today* (Exodus 14:13)—on that same route, in that very manner, so shall He do for you.[517]

"Further, they will gather afterward from all sides against Israel, and the people of Israel will think then that they will be eliminated—sold to their foes—as is written: *There you shall offer yourselves for sale*. It is not written *you shall be sold*, but rather *you shall offer yourselves for sale*—in your hearts you will imagine that you have been sold. But this will not occur—it is written: *none will buy*. And there will be none who shall rule over them.[518]

"All this will occur at the end of days; and it is all dependent upon *teshuvah*. But it is all concealed, as is written: *in order that you may prosper in all that you do* (Deuteronomy 29:8)—one who has a heart should contemplate and will know to return to his Lord."[519]

Rabbi Shim'on asked, "Where is Israel's redemption revealed among these curses?"

Elijah replied, "Examine carefully and see the most horrific instance of them all—that is where it appears." He examined carefully, and found the verse *Your life will dangle*

before you, and you will be terrified night and day and will have no faith in your life (Deuteronomy 28:66). Even though there are those who know that time, life dangles before them, and they are uncertain—even though this is the essence, and the words endure."[520]

In the evening, Rabbi Shim'on wrote a note and placed it in the mouth of the turtledove, which journeyed back to Rabbi Yose—who had stayed put, his eyes expectant. Upon spotting [the dove], he said, "Turtledove, Turtledove, you are the most faithful bird in the skies!" He proclaimed of it: *the dove came back to him at eventide; and look, a plucked off olive leaf was in its bill* (Genesis 8:11). He took the note and went to the companions. He showed it to them, and they were astonished.[521]

Rabbi Yehudah wept, saying, "Alas! Even though we do not know his whereabouts, *the place where the tree falls, there it will be* (Ecclesiastes 11:3). Where Son of Yoḥai is found, his companions are there with him, awakened by him, learning from him. Happy is the soul of Son of Yoḥai, for the blessed Holy One has performed miracles with him; he has decreed, and the blessed Holy One has fulfilled! In the future, he will be the head of the righteous ones who sit in the Garden of Eden; he will receive the face of *Shekhinah* and will see the blessed Holy One. Delighting with the righteous ones, he will call to them: *Come, let us bow down and kneel; let us bend the knee before YHVH our Maker* (Psalms 95:6)."[522]

LIQQUTIM לקוטים

Gleanings[523]

Joseph was given what was already his. A mouth that did not kiss sin—*on your mouth all my people shall be kissed* (Genesis 41:40). Mystery of the matter: from him shall the entire world be fed, and from him all souls shall emerge. [60b] A neck that did not incline toward sin—*He placed the*

gold chain around his neck (ibid., 42). Mystery of the matter: Seven rungs above him all streaming toward him, a fine stream from the Holy Ancient One. This is the mystery of זהב (*zahav*), *gold*, which equals fourteen, since each and every one of those seven rungs encompasses Compassion and Judgment.[524]

This is the mystery that was taught by the Masters of the Mishnah: "A sukkah that is more than twenty cubits high is unfit," since each and every one comprises Compassion and Judgment. And if it is less than ten it is unfit, since it does not contain Compassion and Judgment.[525]

A body that did not incline toward sin—*had him clothed in garments of* שש (*shesh*), *linen* (ibid.)—mystery of *vav* of the holy name.[526]

Legs that did not walk toward sin—*He had him ride in his second chariot* (ibid., 43)—since there is an upper chariot and a lower chariot, and Joseph merited them both because he guarded the covenant, holy circumcision.[527]

שבת (*Shabbat*), Sabbath. ש בת (*Shin bat*)—when the three patriarchs join together with *Malkhut*—called בת (*Bat*), Daughter—She is called שבת (*Shabbat*).[528]

He planted a tamarisk at Beersheba (ibid. 21:33)—the cutting that Primal Adam cut was repaired by Abraham. This was in *Beersheba*—alluding to *Malkhut*.[529]

Alternatively, אשל (*eshel*), *tamarisk*—colors of the attributes *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*—אדום שחור לבן (*adom, shaḥor, lavan*), red, black, white. She drew from them in the mystery of *three flocks of sheep lying beside it* (ibid. 29:2).[530]

Jacob served in the academy of Shem and Eber for fourteen years in order to refine the Jubilee and Sabbatical years, corresponding to Leah and Rachel.[531]

Come and see: When the blessed Holy One took Israel out from the land of Egypt, He carried them off with the mystery of the Name of Forty-Two Letters, the same one with which He created heaven and earth. Thus, when Israel departed from the land of Egypt, they embarked upon twelve journeys—until they arrived at Mount Sinai, as is written: *On* זה (*zeh*), *this, day they came to the Wilderness of Sinai* (Exodus 19:1). The blessed Holy One wanted them to embark on thirty more expeditions, to be traveled in three days, as is written: *They journeyed on from the mountain of YHVH a three days' distance* (Numbers 10:33)—ten journeys daily.[532]

Once they sinned, they caused these journeys to count as thirteen primary ones; and on account of this they did not ascend to the land until they traveled thirty more journeys, completing the mystery of the Name of Forty-Two Letters—as in the Account of Creation.[533]

But from the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden (Genesis 3:3)—the place where human spirits are concealed, the place called Treasury of Souls, next to the blessed Holy One. He said to them, "Do not attempt to comprehend how spirits separate from My splendorous union."[534]

Of this we have learned: It is written: *When a woman brings forth seed* [*and bears a male*] (Leviticus 12:2), [not encompassing] male and female. This is the way of the world, that they are not conjoined when they emerge from above in couples—ever since Primal Adam and his partner sinned before the blessed Holy One. This is why they are split when they emerge from above—until there is goodwill before the blessed Holy One. If a person is deserving, a man is given his mate; but if not, he is separated from her and given another, and they sire children who are unfit.[535]

Of this is written *My spirit shall not abide in the human forever, since he too is flesh* (Genesis 6:3). What is the

meaning of רוחי (*ruḥi*), *My spirit*? It should be רוחו (*ruḥo*), *his spirit*! Well, the explanation is that they are two—רוחי (*ruḥai*), *My spirits*, that emerge in pairs will not be judged as one. Of this is written *and bears* [*a male*] (Leviticus 12:2), not encompassing male and female according to the way of the world that they themselves caused.[536]

Passages (Mis)Labeled as Tosefta

Tosefta.[1] בראשית ברא (*Bereshit bara*), *In the beginning,... created* (Genesis 1:1)—alludes to *Keter* and *Ḥokhmah*. אלהים (*Elohim*), *God*—alludes to *Binah*. את (*Et*)—alludes to *Gedullah* and *Gevurah*. השמים (*Ha-Shamayim*), *the Heavens*—*Tif'eret*. ואת (*Ve-et*), *And the*—alludes to *Netsaḥ*, *Hod*, and *Yesod*. הארץ (*Ha-arets*), *The earth*, alludes to *Malkhut*.[2] [1:32a]

Tosefta. We have learned: "If one circumcised but did not uncover the circumcision, it is as if he had not circumcised." This is the case because there are two rungs: *milah*, circumcision, and *peri'ah*, uncovering; *Remember* (Exodus 20:8) and *Guard* (Deuteronomy 5:12); Righteous One and Righteousness; Male and Female. Sign of the covenant alludes to Joseph, and covenant alludes to Rachel—and one must bind them. How does one bind them? When one [32b] circumcises and uncovers. But one who circumcises and does not uncover—it is as if he has riven them asunder.[3] [37a]

Tosefta. The rabbis said, "When the blessed Holy One created Adam, he created him in the Garden of Eden and commanded him regarding seven commandments. He sinned and was banned from the Garden of Eden. Two heavenly angels—Uzza and Aza'el—said before the blessed Holy One, 'If we were on earth, we would be righteous!'[4]

"The blessed Holy One replied, 'And can you prevail over the evil impulse?'

"They said before Him, 'We can.'

"At once, the blessed Holy One cast them down, as is said: *The Nephilim* [or: *fallen ones*] *were on earth in those days* (Genesis 6:4), and *heroes of old*… (ibid.). When they alit on earth, the evil impulse penetrated them, as is said, *they took themselves wives, whomever they chose* (ibid., 2). They sinned, and were uprooted from their holiness."[5] [54b]

Tosefta. When Cain said, "*My iniquity is too great to be forgiven* (Genesis 4:13)," the blessed Holy One forgave him, and reduced his punishment by half. At first He decreed against him, saying, "נע ונד (*Na ve-nad*), *Wavering and wandering, shall you be on earth* (ibid., 12)," but now he was left with just נוד (*Nod*), Nod, as is said: *Cain went out from the presence of YHVH, and dwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden* (ibid., 16). For he left the presence of *YHVH* in order to wander in the land, but not to waver.[6]

They said further: When Cain went out from the presence of *YHVH*, Adam asked him, "My son, what happened with your case?"

He replied, "Father, I've already been notified that the blessed Holy One forgave me with just Nod."

He asked, "How?"

He replied, "Since I repented and confessed before Him."

Adam remarked, "Could it be just that this is the power of *teshuvah*, and yet I did not know!" He began to extol his Lord and to confess to Him. He opened, saying, "*A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day. It is good* להודות (*le-hodot*), *to confess, to YHVH* (Psalms 92:1)—it is good to extol and to confess before the blessed Holy One.[7] [59b]

Tosefta. Why *Noah Noah* (Genesis 6:9)—twice? Well, the explanation is that each and every righteous one in the world [60a] has two spirits: a spirit in this world, and a spirit in the world that is coming. So, too, with all the

righteous ones: *Moses! Moses!* (Exodus 3:4), *Jacob! Jacob!* (Genesis 46:2), *Abraham! Abraham!* (ibid. 22:11), *Samuel! Samuel!* (1 Samuel 3:10), *Shem! Shem!* (Genesis 11:10).[8]

This excludes Isaac, of whom it is not written as it is for these others. This is because when Isaac was offered upon the altar, his this-worldly soul departed. When he uttered "Who Resurrects the Dead" to Abraham, his soul from the world that is coming returned. This is why you find that the blessed Holy One conjoined His name with Isaac alone, since he had been deemed like one who had died. Scripture alludes to this, saying, *Behold, He puts no trust even in His holy ones* (Job 15:15).[9]

Alternatively, *These are the offspring* [*of Noah*] (Genesis 6:9)—since he was righteous he was praised twice. *He was wholehearted, in his generation* (ibid.), but in other generations he would have been utterly insignificant—such as in the generation of Abraham, generation of Moses, or generation of David.[10]

Alternatively, the blessed Holy One had seen what he achieved in a generation in which all were sinners, all the more so had he been in a generation in which all were righteous.[11] [98b]

Tosefta. *YHVH appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre* (ibid. 18:1). Why at *the terebinths of Mamre* and not elsewhere? The explanation is that Mamre had given Abraham advice about the cutting of his circumcision. When the blessed Holy One instructed Abraham to circumcise, Abraham sought counsel from his friends. Aner said to him, "You are in your nineties, and you're going to torment yourself?"[12]

Mamre said to him, "Do you remember the day that the Chaldeans cast you into the blazing furnace? And the famine that spread across the world, as is written: *And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down to Egypt* (Genesis 12:10)? And those kings you chased,

obliterating them (Genesis 14:1–16)? The blessed Holy One saved you from them all—no one could harm you. Rise up, fulfill the commandment of your Master!”

The blessed Holy One said to him, “Mamre, you have counseled him regarding circumcision. By your life! I will reveal Myself to him only in your palace, as is written: *by the terebinths of Mamre*.[13] [3:55b][14]

Tosefta. Rabbi El’azar and his father-in-law, Rabbi Yose, were travelling from Usha to Lydda. Rabbi Yose said to Rabbi El’azar, “Did you happen to hear from your father the meaning of the verse *Jacob went on his way*, [*and angels of God encountered him*] (Genesis 32:2)?”[15]

He replied, “I know nothing of it.”

While they were walking they reached the cave of Lydda. They heard a voice saying, “Two fawns of the doe fulfilled My pleasurable desire before Me—they were the holy camps that Jacob encountered.”[16]

Rabbi El’azar was excited but pained in his soul. He said, “Master of the World! Is its nature thus? It would have been better had we not heard! We heard, but do not understand!”[17]

A miracle happened for him and he heard that voice saying, “They were Abraham and Isaac.”[18]

He fell prostrate and beheld the image of his father. El’azar said to him, “Father, I inquired and it was explained that it was Abraham and Isaac who manifested to Jacob when he was saved from Laban!”[19]

He said to him, “My son, take out your note and heed the voice of your elder, for it was a mouth speaking grandly! And not only in this instance, but it occurs thus for every righteous person: the souls of the righteous manifest before them to save them; they are supernal, holy angels.[20]

“Come and see: Isaac was still alive at this time; but when he was bound upon the altar, his holy soul had been taken to his Master’s Throne of Glory, whereupon his eyes

had been sealed from seeing. This is the significance of what is written: [*Had not*…] *the Fear of Isaac been with me* (Genesis 31:42).”[21]

REFERENCE MATTER

Abbreviations

ABD	David Noel Freedman, ed., *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
add.	addendum
Add.	Additional
Alter	Robert Alter:* *Ancient Israel*; *Book of Psalms*; *Five Books of Moses; Wisdom Books*
Arukh	Nathan ben Yeḥiel of Rome, *Sefer he-Arukh*
Arukh ha-Shalem	Nathan ben Yeḥiel of Rome, *Arukh ha-Shalem*
Battei Midrashot	Shlomo Aharon Wertheimer, ed., *Battei Midrashot*
B.C.E.	before the Common Era
BD4	MS Kaufmann A238, Magyar Tudomanyos Akademia, Budapest
BD5	MS Kauffman A 485, Magyar Tudomanyos Akademia, Budapest
Beit ha-Midrash	Adolph Jellinek, ed., *Beit ha-Midrash*
Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot	Boaz Huss, ed., *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot she-be-Sefer ha-Zohar*
BT	Babylonian Talmud
C12	MS Add. 521, University Library, Cambridge
C.E.	Common Era

“Carteset Scholem”	Gershom Scholem, “Carteset Scholem”
Cin1	MS 508, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati
Cin3	MS 532, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati
CM1	MS Dd. 3, 5, University Library, Cambridge
Cr or Cremona	Cremona edition of the Zohar
CT1	MS F 12 140, Trinity College, Cambridge
Derekh Emet	*Derekh Emet*, in *Sefer ha-Zohar*, ed. Reuven Margaliot
diss.	dissertation
ed.	editor (plural, eds.); edition; edited by
Edri	Yehuda Edri, trans., *Sefer ha-Zohar*
EJ	*Encyclopaedia Judaica*
esp.	especially
fasc.	fascicle
frag.	fragmentary
Gordis	Robert Gordis, *Book of Job*
Greenberg	Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*
Haggahot Maharḥu	Ḥayyim Vital, *Haggahot Maharḥu*
Hash	*Hashmatot*
Heikh	*Heikhalot*
Huss, *Reception and Impact*	Boaz Huss, *The Zohar: Reception and Impact*
intro	introduction
IR	*Idra Rabba*
IZ	*Idra Zuta*
J1	MS Heb. 4˚612, The National Library of Israel, Jerusalem
JT	Jerusalem Talmud

KP or *Ketem Paz*	Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*
L2	MS 762, British Museum, London
L32	MS Gaster 1097, British Library, London
L40	Add. 27079, British Library, London
LB1	MS 76, Beth Din & Beth Hamidrash, London
LD1	MS Or. 4770, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Leiden
Levine	Baruch Levine, *JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus*
M	Mishnah
M2	Cod. hebr. 203, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
M3	Cod. hebr. 40, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
M8	Cod. hebr. 218, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
Mantua	Mantua edition of the *Zohar*
Margaliot	Reuven Margaliot, ed., *Sefer ha-Zohar*
Mat	*Matnitin*
Matoq mi-Devash	Daniel Frisch, *Peirush Matoq mi-Devash*
Md1	MS g.X.2.62, Biblioteca Estense, Modena
Md2	MS g.X.2.56, Biblioteca Estense, Modena
Meroz, "The Grieving Dead"	Meroz, "The Story in the *Zohar* about the Grieving Dead"
MhN	*Midrash ha-Ne'lam*
Miqdash Melekh	Shalom Buzaglo, *Miqdash Melekh*
Mn1	MS ebr. 70, Comunita Israelitica, Mantua

Mopsik	Charles Mopsik, trans. and ed., *Le Zohar*
MS (pl. MSS)	manuscript(s)
MS1	MS Guenzburg 83, Russian State Library, Moscow
MT	Masoretic Text
Mz or Munkacz	*Zohar Ḥadash*, Munkacz
n. (plural, nn.)	note(s)
N15	MS 1724, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
N23	MS 1761, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
N47	MS 2076, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
n.d.	no date
Nitsotsei Orot	Ḥayyim Joseph David Azulai, *Nitsotsei Orot*
Nitsotsei Zohar	Reuven Margaliot, *Nitsotsei Zohar*
NJPS	*Tanakh*, New Jewish Publication Society translation
O2	MS 1564, Bodleian Library, Oxford
O5	MS Opp. 466, Bodleian Library, Oxford
O6	MS Opp. 429, Bodleian Library, Oxford
O16	MS 2433, Bodleian Library, Oxford
O17	MS 2514, Bodleian Library, Oxford
O21	MS Opp. 737, Bodleian Library, Oxford
Or ha-Ḥammah	Abraham Azulai, *Or ha-Ḥammah*
Or ha-Levanah	Abraham Azulai, *Or ha-Levanah*
OM1	MS 77 h 22, Oxford University, Merton College, Oxford
OY or *Or*	Moses Cordovero, *Or Yaqar*

Yaqar	
p. (plural, pp.)	page(s)
P1	MS héb. 778, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
P2	MS héb. 779, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
P3	MS héb. 780, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
P16	MS héb. 835, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
PA2	MS H55A, Alliance Israélite Universelle, Paris
par.	paragraph
Pereq *Shirah*	Malachi Beit-Arié, ed., *Pereq Shirah*
Piq	*Piqqudin*
PR	Moses Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim*
PR11	MS 3483, Biblioteca Palatina, Parma
PR13	MS 351, Biblioteca Palatina, Parma
QhM	*Qav ha-Middah*
Radak	Rabbi David Kimḥi
Rashi	Rabbi Solomon Yitsḥaki
Rashba	Rabbi Solomon ibn Adret
RM	*Ra'aya Meheimna*
RR	*Raza de-Razin*
S or Salonika	*Zohar Ḥadash*, Salonika
SA	*Sefarim Aḥerim*
Sarna	Nachum Sarna, *Exodus*
Scholem or Scholem, *Zohar*	Gershom Scholem, *Sefer ha-Zohar shel Gershom Scholem*
idem, *ZḤ*	*Zohar Ḥadash* of Gershom Scholem
SdTs	*Sifra di-Tsni'uta*
ShS	*Shir ha-Shirim*
sing.	singular
SO	*Sitrei Otiyyot*

Soncino	Harry Sperling et al., trans., *The Zohar* (Soncino Press)
ST	*Sitrei Torah*
Sullam	Yehudah Ashlag, *Sefer ha-Zohar… im… ha-Sullam*
T1	Friedberg Collection 5–015, University of Toronto Library, Toronto
T1*	Friedberg Collection 5–015, University of Toronto Library, Toronto (separate text within the Toronto manuscript, folios 126b–127a)
Tiq	*Tiqqunim* (in *Zohar Ḥadash*)
Tos	*Tosefta*
trans.	translator(s); translated by
TZ	*Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*
V or Venice	*Zohar Ḥadash*, Venice
V5	MS ebr. 206, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V6	MS ebr. 207, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V12	MS ebr. 428, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V15	MS Neofiti 22, Biblioteca, Apostolica, Vatican
V20	MS ebr. 606, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V21	MS ebr. 202, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V23	MS ebr. 210, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V206	MS ebr. 206, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
Wald, “Translation”	Steven Wald, in Wald, *The Doctrine of the Divine Name*, 73–96
Wald, “Commentary”	Steven Wald, “Commentary,” in Wald, *The Doctrine of the Divine Name*, 115–44
Wald, “Notes”	Steven Wald, in Wald, *The Doctrine of the Divine Name*, 97–144
ZḤ	*Zohar Ḥadash*

[*] The intended particular work or volume by this author can be inferred from the context in which it is cited.

Transliteration of Hebrew and Aramaic

א	*alef*	’[1]	ל	*lamed*	*l*
בּ	*bet*	*b*	מ	*mem*	*m*
ב	*vet*	*v*	נ	*nun*	*n*
ג	*gimel*	*g*	ס	*samekh*	*s*
ד	*dalet*	*d*	ע	*ayin*	’[2]
ה	*he*	*h*	פּ	*pe*	*p*
ו	*vav*	*v*	פ	*phe*	*f*[3]
ז	*zayin*	*z*	צ	*tsadi*	*ts*
ח	*ḥet*	*ḥ*	ק	*qof*	*q*
ט	*tet*	*t*	ר	*resh*	*r*
י	*yod*	*y, i*	שׁ	*shin*	*sh*
כּ	*kaf*	*k*	שׂ	*sin*	*s*
כ	*khaf*	*kh*	ת	*tav*	*t*

The English equivalent letter is doubled when a strong *dagesh* in Hebrew or Aramaic characterizes a verbal conjugation or indicates an assimilated letter, e.g., *dibber, yitten*. However, if the Hebrew letter (in which a *dagesh* appears) is represented by two English letters (such as *sh* or *ts*), then that English equivalent is not doubled, e.g., *va-yishaqehu, matsot*. Further, a single English equivalent letter is not doubled when preceded by a hyphenated prefix, e.g., *ha-sefer, la-melekh, mi-tokh*.

Proper names that appear in roman type do not follow the above schema. Biblical names are rendered according to the *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh*. Rabbinic names are rendered according to common convention, e.g., Akiva,

Resh Lakish. Medieval names are Anglicized, e.g., Moses de León, Joseph Gikatilla. Authors' names in the Bibliography follow library listings or the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*.

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1. *Alef* is not transliterated at the beginning or end of a word nor after a hyphenated prefix. Elsewhere it is transliterated only when accompanied by a vowel, e.g., *Shemu'el*.

2. *Ayin* is not transliterated at the beginning of a word, nor after a hyphenated prefix, nor, unless accompanied by a vowel, at the end of a word. Thus, *Shema*, but *Bava Metsi'a*.

3. Occasionally transliterated as *ph* to compare or contrast it to the letter *pe*.

Glossary

Adam Human being; man; the first male (sometimes called Primal Adam); the first human being, who is androgynous or a male androgyne. Also refers to the Primordial Adam—the anthropomorphic configuration of *sefirot*.

Adonai Lord. One of the divine names, traditionally used as the vocalized form of the ineffable *YHVH*. In Kabbalah, it represents *Shekhinah*.

aggadah, aggadta "Tale"; the non-legal contents of the Talmud and Midrash, often based on biblical exegesis. It includes ethical and moral teaching, theological speculation, legends, and folklore.

Amidah "Standing"; the central prayer, recited three times daily.

amora, pl. ***amora'im*** "Speaker, interpreter"; a teacher who lived in the three centuries or so following the compilation of the Mishnah (ca. 200 C.E.) and whose opinions are recorded in subsequent rabbinic literature.

Arikh Anpin "Slow to anger, long-suffering, forbearing, patient"; the highest sefirotic realm, characterized by pure love and compassion (corresponding to *Keter*).

Assembly of Israel Hebrew, כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra'el*); in rabbinic literature, a phrase normally denoting the people of Israel. In the *Zohar*, the phrase can refer to the earthly community of Israel but also (often primarily) to *Shekhinah*, the divine feminine counterpart of the people.

baraita A Tannaitic teaching that was not included in the Mishnah. The name derives from the root *br*, "outside"—that is, outside the scope of the canonized Mishnah.

beit midrash "Study hall."

Binah "Understanding"; the third *sefirah*; the Divine Mother who gives birth to the seven lower *sefirot*.

blessed Holy One Common rabbinic name for God. In the *Zohar* it often designates *Tif'eret*.

Botsina (**or *Botsitsa***) ***de-Qardinuta*** The "Lamp (or Spark) of Adamantine Darkness"—the luminous, invisible, divine instrument emerging from *Ein Sof* that measures, giving scale, shape, light, and color to the *sefirot* below. It is often identified with the *Qav ha-Middah*, "the Line of Measure."

Da'at "Knowledge"; sometimes designating the hidden *sefirah* that mediates between *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*.

Din "Judgment"; a divine attribute that balances *Ḥesed*, "Love"; also called *Gevurah*. In the main body of the *Zohar* it is the fifth *sefirah*; the left arm of the divine body.

Dwelling Hebrew, משכן (*mishkan*). The portable sanctuary (or Tabernacle), which according to Exodus was constructed by Moses and the Israelites, and then carried from encampment to encampment as the people journeyed through the Sinai Desert.

Ein Sof "There is no end"; that which is boundless; the Infinite. The ultimate reality of God beyond all specific qualities of the *sefirot*; the God beyond God. Sometimes used in an adverbial sense, meaning "limitless or endless," rather than the nominative, which refers to the most recondite aspect of Divinity.

Ehyeh asher Ehyeh The divine name that God provides to Moses when the latter asks for God's name. In the *Zohar*, the name usually signifies *Keter*.

El "God"; a biblical name for God. In Kabbalah, it is associated with the *sefirah Ḥesed*.

Elohim “God, gods”; a biblical name for God. In the *Zohar* it has various sefirotic associations: *Binah, Gevurah, Shekhinah*.

Geonic Pertaining to the period or literature of the Geonim (the heads of central governing councils and academies based in the Land of Israel and in Babylonia), which extended from approximately 600 to 1040 C.E..

Gevurah “Power”; the fifth *sefirah*; also called *Din*.

gimatriyya Derived from the Greek *geometria* (“measuring the earth”); a method of interpretation based on the numerical value of Hebrew letters.

halakhah “Practice, law,” from the root הלך (*hlkh*), “to walk”: the way that one should follow.

Hallel “Praise”; selection comprising Psalms 113–18, recited in the Temple and adopted into synagogue liturgy after the morning service on *Pesaḥ, Shavu’ot, Sukkot* and *Ḥannukah*. During the intermediate and last days of *Pesaḥ*, and on *Rosh Ḥodesh* (the New Moon), an abbreviated *Hallel* is recited (omitting the first parts of Psalms 115 and 116).

ḥashmal The precise meaning of the term is unclear, but the context in Ezekiel (1:27) indicates a bright substance. It has been rendered *amber, gleaming amber*, or *glowing metal*. In the *Zohar*, it represents a kernel of holiness that is surrounded by the four demonic husks or shells.

Hashmatot “Omissions”; additions printed at the end of the first of the three standard Aramaic volumes of the *Zohar*, drawn from the Cremona edition and *Zohar Ḥadash*.

ḥasid, pl. ***ḥasidim*** “Pious one,” devotee, saint, lover of God.

Havdalah “Differentiation”; prayer recited at the conclusion of Sabbath and festivals to indicate the distinction between the sacred day that has ended and the weekday that is beginning.

ḥayyot, sing, *ḥayyah* “Creatures, living beings”; four *ḥayyot* carry the heavenly chariot in Ezekiel’s vision. In the

Zohar, the term can refer to four *sefirot* carrying the uppermost aspect of Divinity.

Heikhalot "Palaces, Halls"; descriptions of the heavenly and demonic palaces in *Zohar* 1:38a–45b; 2:244b–268b.

Ḥesed "Loving-kindness, love, grace"; a divine attribute that balances *Din*, "Judgment." In Kabbalah, it is the fourth *sefirah*; the right arm of the divine body.

Hod "Splendor"; the eighth *sefirah*; the left leg of the divine body; source of prophecy along with *Netsaḥ*.

Ḥokhmah "Wisdom"; in the main body of the *Zohar*, the second *sefirah*; the primordial point of emanation.

Idra Rabba "The Great Assembly"; a description of the gathering of Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions at the threshing house, where profound mysteries of divine being are expounded. *Zohar* 3:127b–145a.

Idra Zuta "The Small Assembly"; a description of the last gathering of Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions, the master's final teachings, and his ecstatic death. *Zohar* 3:287b–296b.

Israel Often, the people of Israel.

Jubilee The year of release, occurring every fifty years at the end of the cycle of seven sabbatical years. According to Leviticus 25, in the Jubilee all land reverts to its original owners and all indentured Israelite slaves are freed.

Kabbalah Hebrew, קבלה (*qabbalah*), "receiving, that which is received, tradition"; originally referring to tradition in general (or to post-Mosaic Scripture), but from the thirteenth century onward, specifically to the esoteric teachings of Judaism.

kavvanah "Intention, concentration"; spiritual concentration and devotion while praying or performing any *mitsvah*.

kelal* and *perat "General rule" (or "principle, class") and "specification" (or "particular"), respectively; deriving

from rabbinic hermeneutical rules concerning "a generalization" and "a specification."

Keter "Crown"; the first *sefirah*; coeternal with *Ein Sof*; also called *Ratson* ("Will") and *Ayin* ("Nothingness").

ketubbah A legal document given by a groom to his bride, ensuring her sustenance upon the occasion of the husband's death or divorce. Developed in the early rabbinic period.

Kol "All"; frequently symbolizing the *sefirah Yesod*.

Lilith The most prominent female demon, who harms babies and seduces men; married to Samael.

lulav "Sprout"; rabbinic term for the palm branch that is used in worship, together with three other plant species, on the festival of *Sukkot*.

Ma'ariv The third of the three daily prayer services, recited in the evening.

Malkhut "Kingdom"; the tenth *sefirah*, ruling the lower worlds; also called *Shekhinah*.

Matnitin "Our Mishnah"; short pieces scattered throughout the *Zohar*, most of which appear as utterances of a heavenly voice urging the Companions to arouse themselves and open their hearts to the mysteries. Some of them contain principles of kabbalistic teaching in a condensed form, constituting a kind of mystical Mishnah, expounded in the main section of the *Zohar*.

Matronita Aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the wife of *Tif'eret*.

merkavah "Chariot." The book of Ezekiel opens with the prophet's vision of God riding upon a "chariot," which was supported by four creatures or angelic beings. Descriptions of the divine chariot play a central role in the history of Jewish mysticism. Sometimes the term can be used to refer to an inferior entity's function as the structural support for a superior entity; thus it can refer to any grouping of four *sefirot* or angels, sometimes in a

hierarchical series, or even to one entity that supports another.

Metatron One of the supreme powers in the heavenly realm, often depicted as the chief angel. He is sometimes identified as *sar ha-panim* (Prince of the Countenance), standing face-to-face with God, or as *sar ha-olam* (Prince of the World). In Kabbalah he traverses the boundary between the angelic and divine realms.

midrash, pl. **midrashim** Homiletical or legal interpretation of the Bible.

Midrash ha-Ne'lam "The Concealed Midrash, the Esoteric Midrash"; an early stratum of the *Zohar*. Its language is a mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic. *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on the Torah pertains to several portions of Genesis, the beginning of Exodus, and several other portions; it is printed partly alongside the main text of the *Zohar* and partly in *Zohar Ḥadash*. The subject matter of *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* is mostly Creation, the soul, and the world to come; its style is often allegorical. *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on Song of Songs, Ruth, and Lamentations is printed in *Zohar Ḥadash*, although all three of these differ from typical *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* texts.

Minḥah "Offering"; second of the three daily prayer services, recited in the afternoon.

Mishnah Collection of oral teachings compiled near the beginning of the third century by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi; the earliest codification of Jewish Oral Law; the core of the Talmud.

mitsvah, pl. ***mitsvot*** "Commandment"; one of the 613 commandments of the Torah or one of various rabbinic precepts; religious duty.

Musaf "Supplement"; the additional Sabbath and festival worship service, usually recited immediately after the morning service.

nefesh "Soul; life force"; the basic level of the soul, animating the human being.

neshamah “Breath, soul,” soul-breath; the highest level of the soul.

Netsaḥ “Endurance”; the seventh *sefirah*; the right leg of the divine body; source of prophecy along with *Hod*.

notariqon An esoteric technique of interpretation, in which a word is split into parts to evince another meaning. Sometimes rabbinic literature uses the term to refer more generically to a range of unconventional ways of reading and interpreting biblical words.

ofanim, sing. ***ofan*** Literally, “wheels”; in Ezekiel’s chariot vision they may signify alternatively to a class of angelic beings. In the *Zohar*, they can also refer to the *sefirot Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod*, and *Malkhut*.

omer “Sheaf” of newly harvested barley; the seven-week period of ceremonially counting days during the harvest season between the second day of *Pesaḥ* and the eve of *Shavu’ot*.

Oral Torah The rabbinic interpretation of the Written Torah (the Five Books of Moses); in Kabbalah, a symbol of *Shekhinah*.

Sitra Aḥra “Other Side”; the demonic realm, or the shadow of the Divine, led by Samael and Lilith.

parashah “Portion, section”; portion of the Torah read on a particular Sabbath, named after its opening word (or phrase) or a key word (or phrase) in the opening sentences.

peri’ah “Uncovering”; the act of tearing and pulling back the mucous membrane that covers the corona of the penis; the second stage in the rabbinic ritual of circumcision, after the foreskin is cut and removed.

Pesaḥ “Passover”; first of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, celebrated in the middle of the month of Nisan and commemorating the Exodus from Egypt.

Piqqudin “Commandments”; kabbalistic interpretations of the commandments scattered throughout the *Zohar* (to be distinguished from *Ra’aya Meheimna*).

Qav ha-Middah Literally, *measuring line* (Jeremiah 31:39). In the *Zohar* the "Line (or: Standard) of Measure" is the luminous, invisible, divine instrument emerging from *Ein Sof* that "measures"—and in so doing, it gives scale, shape, light, color, and (eventually) permanence to the *sefirot* below. The term also serves as the title of a Zoharic treatise, delivered by Rabbi Shim'on, that provides a detailed description of the process of divine emanation. *Zohar Ḥadash* 56d–58d.

Qedushah "Sanctification"; one of several standard prayers that describe and emulate the ongoing sanctification of God by the angels in heaven.

Ra'aya Meheimna "The Faithful Shepherd"; a separate composition on the kabbalistic meaning of the commandments, printed piecemeal in the *Zohar*. Here Moses, the Faithful Shepherd, appears to Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions, revealing secrets.

Raḥamim "Compassion"; the sixth *sefirah*, harmonizing the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Din*; also called *Tif'eret*.

Rav Metivta "Head of the Academy"; the account of a visionary journey by Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions to the Garden of Eden, where they hear mysteries concerning the "world that is coming" from one of the heads of the heavenly academy. *Zohar* 3:161b–174a.

Raza de-Razin "The Secret of Secrets"; a section of the *Zohar* dealing with physiognomy, metoposcopy, and chiromancy (*Zohar* 2:70a–75a [printed alongside the main text], *Zohar Ḥadash* 35b–37c). A second version is incorporated into the main body of the *Zohar* (2:70a–78a).

Rosh Hashanah The Jewish New Year, celebrated on the first two days of the Hebrew month Tishrei.

ruaḥ "Spirit, wind, breath"; in some passages, the second level of soul.

Rut The book of Ruth.

Samael Prince of demons, married to Lilith; identical with Satan.

Sava de-Mishpatim "Old Man of [Torah portion] *Mishpatim*"; an account of the Companions' encounter with a donkey-driver who turns out to be a master of wisdom. *Zohar* 2:94b–114a.

Sefer ha-Zohar "The Book of Radiance."

sefirah, pl. ***sefirot*** Literally, "counting," number, numerical entity; in Kabbalah, one of the ten aspects of divine personality, nine of which emanate from *Ein Sof* and the first *sefirah, Keter*. See the diagram on page ix.

Shaddai An obscure divine name in the Bible; it may originally have meant "[God of] the mountain." In Kabbalah, it denotes *Yesod*.

Shaḥarit The first of the three daily prayer services, recited in the morning.

Shavu'ot "Weeks"; second of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, celebrated seven weeks after the beginning of Passover.

Shekhinah "Presence," divine immanence; the tenth and last *sefirah*; female partner of *Tif'eret*; also called *Malkhut*.

Shema Literally, "hear"; central set of readings recited in the morning and evening prayer services, comprising Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21; and Numbers 15:37–41. The opening verse is: *Hear O Israel! YHVH our God, YHVH is one!*

Shir ha-Shirim The book of Song of Songs.

Sifra di-Tsni'uta "The Book of Concealment"; an anonymous, highly condensed commentary on the beginning of the Torah, consisting of five short chapters and composed in obscure sentences. Its subject is the mysterious dynamics of divine being. *Zohar* 2:176b–179a.

Sitrei Otiyyot "Secrets of the Letters"; a discourse by Rabbi Shim'on focusing on the letters of the divine name

YHVH and how they symbolize the process of emanation. *Zohar Ḥadash* 1b–7b.

Sitrei Torah "Secrets of Torah"; interpretations of certain verses of Genesis, printed in separate columns parallel to the main body of the *Zohar* and in *Zohar Ḥadash*. It includes allegorical explanations of the mysteries of the soul; descriptions of the *sefirot* and their emanation; and discussions of the powers of the Other Side.

Sukkot "Booths"; festival of Booths, last of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, celebrated in the middle of the month of Tishrei at the conclusion of the summer harvest.

Taḥanun "Supplication"; the prayer that follows the *Amidah*, the statutory prayer, in the morning and afternoon services. This prayer (recited on most weekdays) includes a confession of sins and a petition for grace. In Kabbalah, it is often described as a performative demonstration of the willingness to die to attain divine grace.

Talmud Each of the two compilations of Jewish law, legend, ethics, and theology comprising the Mishnah and its vast commentary (the Gemara) by rabbis of the third through fifth centuries. The Jerusalem Talmud was compiled ca. 400 C.E.; the Babylonian Talmud, about one hundred and fifty years later.

tanna, pl. ***tanna'im*** "One who repeats, teacher"; an authority cited in the Mishnah or belonging to the Mishnaic period (first two centuries of the Common Era); an Amoraic scholar whose task was to memorize and recite tannaitic texts.

Targum "Translation"; an Aramaic translation of the Torah or the Bible. Some of the documents called Targum engage in elaboration and commentary on the Bible in addition to straightforward translation.

tefillin "Phylacteries"; two black leather boxes containing passages from the Torah (Exodus 13:1–10, 11–16; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21) written on parchment. They are bound by black leather straps on the left arm (of

right-handed people, and on the right arm of left-handed people) and on the head, and are prescribed for men to wear during weekday morning prayer. Each of the biblical passages indicates that the Children of Israel should place a sign upon their hand and a frontlet (or reminder) between their eyes.

teshuvah "Return, turning back to God, repentance."

tetragrammaton The four-lettered name of God, *YHVH*. In Kabbalah it is the foundation of all being.

Tif'eret "Beauty, glory"; the sixth *sefirah*, harmonizing the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Din*; male partner of *Shekhinah*; the torso of the divine body; also called *Raḥamim*.

Tiqqunei ha-Zohar "Embellishments on the *Zohar*"; an independent book whose setting is similar to *Ra'aya Meheimna*. It comprises a commentary on the beginning of Genesis, each *tiqqun* opening with a new interpretation of the word בראשית (*be-reshit*), "in the beginning."

Tiqqunim "Embellishments"; additional material in the genre of *Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*, printed in *Zohar Ḥadash* 93c–122b.

Torah "Instruction, teaching"; the Five Books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy); by extension, the entire corpus of Jewish religious literature.

Tosafot "Additions"; a collection of comments on the Talmud written between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries in France and Germany, printed in standard editions of the Talmud. Also, a set of Zoharic additions printed at the end of the second and third of the three standard Aramaic volumes of the *Zohar*, drawn from the Cremona edition and from *Zohar Ḥadash*.

Tosefta "Addenda"; in rabbinic literature, a collection of precepts parallel to and contemporary with the Mishnah. In the *Zohar*, a collection similar to *Matnitin*.

Tsaddiq "Righteous One"; a name for *Yesod*, the ninth *sefirah*. Also (when uncapitalized) refers to righteous

people on earth.

tsitsit* or *tzitzit "Tassel," one of four affixed to the hem of a garment, and later of a prayer shawl. See Numbers 15:37–41.

world that is coming Hebrew, העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*); Aramaic, עלמא דאתי (*alma de-atei*); often understood as referring to the hereafter and usually translated as "the world to come." From another perspective, however, "the world that is coming" already exists—occupying another, timeless dimension. In Kabbalah this phrase often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation, who "is constantly coming, never ceasing."

Written Torah The Five Books of Moses; in Kabbalah, a symbol of *Tif'eret*.

Yah A contracted biblical form of the divine name *YHVH*.

Yesod "Foundation"; the ninth *sefirah*, who channels the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah*; the phallus of the divine body; also called *Tsaddiq*.

YHVH The ineffable name of God, apparently deriving from the root הוה (*hvh*), "to be." In the *Zohar* it often symbolizes *Tif'eret*.

Yom Kippur The Day of Atonement, observed on the tenth of the Hebrew month Tishrei.

Ze'eir Anpin "Short-tempered, irascible, impatient"; the configuration of *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* (or *Ḥesed*) through *Yesod*, characterized by a tension between opposites: right versus left, *Ḥesed* versus *Din*.

Zohar "Radiance, splendor."

Zohar Ḥadash "New *Zohar*"; a collection of Zoharic texts not included in the early editions of the *Zohar*. It was first printed in Salonika in 1597. The title is misleading since *Zohar Ḥadash* contains much of *Midrash ha-Ne'lam*, an early stratum of the *Zohar*.

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* For a list of eighty-four *Zohar* manuscripts, see Rubin, "Mif'al ha-Zohar," 172–73.

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This index includes sources that are quoted (rather than merely cited or alluded to) either in the *Zohar* or in the translator's notes. Biblical passages appear mostly in the text of the *Zohar* itself; other listed works appear almost exclusively in the notes. Scriptural quotations are based on *The Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures* by permission of the University of Nebraska Press. Copyright 1985 by The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia.

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1. **when the blessed Holy One created the world…** In the beginning of the process of emanation, God engraved the forms of the *sefirot* (see *Zohar* 1:15a). The upper world, the world of emanation, and the various lower worlds reflect one another. On this cardinal principle of Kabbalah, see *Zohar* 1:57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 205b; 2:5a (*MhN*), 15b (*MhN*), 20a (*MhN*), 48b, 82b, 144a, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:45b, 65b; *ZḤ* 15a, 19a (both *MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. On the similar Hermetic formulation, see *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262.

On creation of worlds through letters, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:10: "כי ביה יהוה צור עולמים (*Ki be-Yah YHVH tsur olamim*), *For by Yah YHVH, an eternal rock* (Isaiah 26:4)—with these two letters the blessed Holy One created His world…. 'This world' was created by ה (*he*)… and 'the world that is coming' was created by י (*yod*)." This midrash interprets the verse as *For by* [*the letters*] י ה (*yod, he*), *YHVH* צר עולמים (*tsar olamim*), *formed worlds*. See also BT *Menaḥot* 29b.

See *Sefer Yetsirah* 2:2: "Twenty-two elemental letters. He engraved them, carved them, weighed them, permuted them, and transposed them, forming with them everything formed and everything destined to be formed." See also BT *Berakhot* 55a; *Zohar* 1:204a; 2:151b.

The opening two sentences of this paragraph appear verbatim in *Zohar* 2:126b.

2. **so too did He create Adam** On the human as a microcosm, see *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:4; Donnolo, *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, 63d–66b; Joseph ibn Ẓaddik, *Sefer ha-Olam ha-Qatan; Zohar* 1:90b, 134b, 186b; 2:23b, 75b; 3:48a; *ZḤ* 3d, 6d (both *MhN*). See also Wolfson, "Dimmui Antropomorfi," 163–64.

3. **six aspects of the world…** Reflecting the structure of the cosmos. See *Sefer Yetsirah* 4:3, where six directions are specified: above, below, east, west, north, and south.

The six aspects also represent the core of the *sefirot*, composed of *Tif'eret* together with the five *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. See *Zohar* 1:47a.

On the creatures of the world fearing Adam on account of his divine image, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 11: "[Adam] stood on his feet and was adorned with the divine image. The creatures saw him and were frightened, thinking that he was their Creator, and they all approached to bow down to him." See *Zohar* 1:13b, 71a, 191a, 221b; 2:55a; 3:107b; *ZḤ* 38c; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 337–38; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:119–20, n. 113.

The verse in Hosea reads: *But they*, כאדם (*ke-adam*), *like Adam* [or: *like humans*], *have violated the covenant. There they have been false to Me*. On this verse, see BT *Sanhedrin* 38b; Rashi, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:56a; 3:122a. The verse is cited at 2:262b (*Heikh*) at the beginning of the halls of impurity.

4. **angels surrounded him and tended to him...** See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 1, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Batyra: "Adam was reclining in the Garden of Eden and ministering angels stood before him, roasting meat for him and cooling wine for him." See also BT *Sanhedrin* 59b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 12. On angels revealing secrets to Adam in the Garden of Eden, cf. *Zohar* 1:37b, 55b.

The Hebrew place-name עדן (*Eden*) means "delight."

See *Zohar* 2:245a (*Heikh*).

5. **seven halls... above... seven halls below...** Corresponding to the celestial and earthly Gardens of Eden, both of which participate in the mystery of the *sefirot*. The halls described here are the halls of the lower Garden of Eden, which serve as a gateway to the heavenly Garden. The lower halls are intermediate between this world and the heavenly Garden of Eden—they contain images and forms of both worlds, and they acclimatize the soul after the death of the body to the celestial realm. The human being originally inhabited these lower halls. See *Zohar* 2:245a (*Heikh*); cf. *TZ* 21, 43b. According to Cordovero in *Or Yaqar*,

the lower garden is for the *ruḥot*, "spirits," and the upper garden for the *neshamot*, the highest aspect of the soul (see *Zohar* 2:141b), though the passage here does not make that distinction.

Just as in the sefirotic realm *Binah* is hidden compared to the six central *sefirot* comprising *Tif'eret*, so the seventh hall is recondite and concealed. On the seventh hall, see *Zohar* 1:39a–b, 45a (both *Heikh*); 2:258b–259a (*Heikh*).

The commentators attribute various sefirotic correlations for each of the halls, beginning with the first hall (*Malkhut-Yesod* combined or *Malkhut* alone) and extending until the seventh hall (*Binah*). See *Or Yaqar*; Elijah of Vilna; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam*, ad loc.

On the earthly and heavenly Gardens of Eden, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 3:22; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 2:295–99; Recanati on Genesis 3:24; *Zohar* 1:7a, 81a (*ST*), 106b (*MhN*), 224b; 2:150a, 209b–210b, 211b–212a, 231b; 3:13a, 53a, 70b; *ZḤ* 18b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 350–51; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 27 (32), 59–62 (73–76); idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 59; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:591–94, 749–51.

The idea of the heavenly realm arranged as a series of seven halls [or: palaces, chambers] lies at the heart of the earliest form of Jewish mysticism, known collectively as the *Heikhalot* corpus, which portrays the mystical adept passing through a series of halls culminating in the seventh —the abode of the Throne of Glory. The seven-tiered structure is explored in diverse ways in the *Zohar*. Here, the seven halls refer to the various abodes of the souls after death, whereas beginning at *Zohar* 1:41a (below, page 24) the halls are pictured as portals and realms located beneath the *sefirot* and through which prayer ascends. In the second version of the *Heikhalot* (2:244b–262b), these two aspects are combined. See also 2:202a–b for yet another treatment of this theme. See also *Zohar* 1:23b (*Tiq*); *TZ* 69, 103b. Cf. *Zohar* 3:167b.

The structure presented here (i.e., extending until *Zohar* 1:41a) is heavily indebted to later midrashic literature, which elaborated the theme of the seven halls or chambers of the Garden of Eden (inspired by the description of seven canopies for the righteous found in BT *Bava Batra* 75a and the seven companies of the righteous in *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 1:10, *Midrash Tehillim* 11:6, *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:2). See for example, *Midrash Konen, Ma'aseh de-Rabbi Yehoshu'a ben Levi, Seder Gan Eden* in *Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:28–29, 49–50, 53. On these compositions, see Micah Perry, *Masoret ve-Shinnui*, 195–254. Another work, *Seder Gan Eden*, apparently authored by Moses de León, and which contains many parallels with the opening pages of this unit, draws heavily on these works. See also Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 61. See Shmueli, "Seder Gan Eden: Mahadurah Mada'it Ve-iyyun" and Scholem's notes. See also *Sidrei de-Shimmusha Rabba* (ed. Scholem), 122–26.

6. **arrayed them for the souls of the righteous…** Following Adam's sin and expulsion, the halls of the lower Garden of Eden are reconfigured; no longer the domain of the human being while alive, they are now arrayed for the souls after death.

7. ***Woman of Whoredom…*** See Hosea 1:2. The shadow side of the divine feminine—*Shekhinah*, the *woman of strength*—is the demonic feminine, signified by the *strange woman*, which is equated here with other gods and the evil impulse (see BT *Shabbat* 105b). See *Zohar* 2:148b, 245a (*Heikh*). On Proverbs 7:5, see *Zohar* 2:264b (*Heikh*).

Proverbs 12:4 reads: *A woman of strength* [or: *valor*] *is her husband's crown, whereas a shameful one is like rot in his bones*. See Proverbs 31:10; *Zohar* 3:42b.

8. **clothed in garments resembling this world…** To enter and experience higher dimensions, the soul is enveloped in a radiant garment. According to other passages in the *Zohar*, such a garment is woven out of one's

virtuous deeds. Parallels appear in Islamic and Iranian eschatology—and in Mahayana Buddhism, according to which the Buddha enjoys *sambhogakaya* (“a body of bliss”), generated by merit accrued over aeons. Here the garment bestowed in the lower Garden of Eden enables the soul to perceive higher forms as part of her acclimation to the upper realms before ascending to the heavenly Garden of Eden. The soul’s garment is associated with the צלם (*tselem*), “image,” an ethereal body. Before entering a human body, each soul exists in the Garden of Eden, where she is clothed in this *tselem*, which resembles the physical body she will inhabit on earth. As the soul leaves the Garden, she removes the ethereal body and prepares to put on an earthly body. Eventually, when the soul returns to the Garden, upon death, she regains the ethereal body.

On the soul’s garment, see *Zohar* 1:66a, 82b, 224a–b, 226b, 233b; 2:98b, 150a, 210a, 229b, 231a, 247a (*Heikh*); 3:69a, 92a–b, 101a, 174b–175a; *ZḤ* 26a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 404; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 56; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 61; Scholem, *Shedim, Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 215–45; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 264–65; Nakamura Hajime, in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Eliade, 2:458. Cf. Matthew 22:1–14; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 36; *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:6; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:35; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 14.

On the ethereal body, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 49:33; *Zohar* 1:7a, 81a (*ST*), 90b–91a, 115b (*MhN*), 131a, 217b, 219a, 220a, 224a–b, 227a–b, 233b; 2:11a, 13a–b, 96b, 141b, 150a, 156b–157a, 161b; 3:13a–b, 43a–b, 61b, 70b, 104a–b, 159b, 169b; *ZḤ* 10b–c, 18b (both *MhN*), 90b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 390; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 276 (133); Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 158–59; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 251–73; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar* 2:770–73. Cf. Rashi on BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, s.v. *ve-ruhot u-nshamot*.

See also the sources cited above in note 5 regarding the earthly and heavenly gardens.

9. **souls of the converts…** Though afforded a place in the Garden of Eden, the garments of the converts are not as luminous as those of their fellow natural-born Jews.

See *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*; below, page 22); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 265 (131).

See also *Ma'aseh de-Rabbi Yehoshu'a ben Levi* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:49); *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:28).

On the precious stones of the Garden, see Ezekiel 28:13; BT *Bava Batra* 75a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 12; *Ma'aseh de-Rabbi Yehoshu'a ben Levi* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:49); *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:28).

10. **an opening descending to the entrance of Hell…** On the proximity of heaven and hell, separated by but a handbreadth, see *Qohelet Rabbah* on Ecclesiastes 7:14.

11. **Onqelos the proselyte…** According to rabbinic tradition, Onqelos, the famed author of the Aramaic translation of the Torah that bears his name, was related to Titus and a convert to Judaism. The story of his conversion is found in BT *Gittin* 56b–57a. Cf. *Ma'aseh de-Rabbi Yehoshu'a ben Levi* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:49) and *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:28), where Obadiah (who according to tradition was a convert) presides.

Presumably the three times a day refer to the three daily prayers.

12. **adjacent to the cave of the patriarchs…** On the proximity of the Garden of Eden to the Cave of Machpelah, the burial ground of the patriarchs and matriarchs (excluding Rachel), and by tradition of Adam and Eve as well, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 58:4, 8; BT *Eruvin* 53a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 20, 36; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 23:9; *Zohar* 1:57b, 81a (*ST*), 127a–128b, 219a, 248b; 2:151b; 3:164a; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 79d (*MhN, Rut*).

On precious stones, see above, note 9.

13. **responded ‘Amen, may His great name be blessed’…** The response of the congregation in the middle of the Kaddish prayer. See BT *Shabbat* 119b: “Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi said, ‘Whoever responds with all his strength: “Amen! May His great name be blessed!”—his decreed sentence is torn up.’… Resh Lakish said, ‘Whoever responds with all his strength: “Amen”—the gates of the Garden of Eden are opened for him.’” See BT *Berakhot* 3a; *Zohar* 1:62b; 2:129b; 3:285b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 70; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 274 (133).

The lights that “fuse and do not fuse” are grasped by the souls, though only partially.

On the Messiah in the Garden of Eden, see [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 269, 274–75 (132–33); *Zohar* 2:7b–8b. See also *Ma’aseh de-Rabbi Yehoshu’a ben Levi* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:50) and *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:29).

14. **third hall… gravely ill and pained…** On the Messiah and the Chamber of the Ill, see *Zohar* 2:212a.

On the heavenly abode and fate of schoolchildren, see [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 280–81 (134); *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*; below, page 22); 2:248b (*Heikh*). See also BT *Avodah Zarah* 3b; *Zohar* 2:113b; *ZḤ* 36b.

15. **fourth hall…** The resounding “voice”—to which the Messiah clings and by which he ascends to the heavenly Garden of Eden—may be the voice of *Shekhinah*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:8b.

On the sufferings of the Messiah, see BT *Sanhedrin* 98a; *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:29–30); *Ma’aseh de-Rabbi Yehoshu’a ben Levi* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:50); *Zohar* 2:212a. On the Messiah’s two cries, see *Zohar* 2:8a. On the mourners of Zion, see *Zohar* 2:8b, 195b; *ZḤ* 88a (*MhN, Rut*).

16. **Then he dons…** “Royal robe” and “purple robe” render פורפירא (*purpira*). The full verse from Psalms reads: *He will execute judgment upon the nations—filled with bodies*

—smashing heads over the wide earth. In the biblical context, the phrase *filled with bodies* refers to the heaps of corpses among the nations. Here, it refers to a garment of vengeance donned by God inscribed with the martyrs of Israel. See *Midrash Tehillim* 9:13; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Numbers 247, Psalms 643, 869; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 284–85 (136); *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*; below, page 23), 61b, 191a, 224b; 2:8b, 246b (*Heikh*); 3:140b (*IR*); *ZḤ* 70d (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:787; Liebes, "Porphoriyatah shel Helena."

See also Isaiah 59:17: *He donned victory like a coat of mail, with a helmet of triumph on His head. He clothed himself with garments of retribution, wrapped Himself in zeal as in a robe*.

On the soul's garments, see above, note 8.

17. **ten ordained nobles—Rabbi Akiva and his companions…** The ten nobles are the ten martyrs of Jewish tradition, slain during the Hadrianic persecution in the second century. See BT *Pesaḥim* 50a; *Bava Batra* 10b; *Sanhedrin* 110b; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:13; *Elleh Ezkerah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:64); *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash* 2:29); *Seder Gan Eden* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:53). See also [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 284 (135); *Zohar* 2:254b–255a (*Heikh*).

Cf. *Zohar* 2:254a (*Heikh*), where Rabbi Akiva inhabits the sixth hall. Significantly, they are described here as ascending within the speculum above, correlated with the *sefirah Tif'eret*, the sixth *sefirah*, overseeing the sixth hall.

"Speculum" renders אספקלריאה (*Ispaqlarya*); alternatively, "glass, mirror, lens." See BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine], while Moses our teacher gazed through translucent glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that shines]." See also *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:14. Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see though a glass darkly, but then face-to-face."

On the verse in Isaiah, see BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “All the prophets prophesied only concerning the days of the Messiah, but as for the world that is coming, *No eye has seen, O God, but You*, [*what You will do for one who awaits You*].”

18. **In the fifth hall abide…** On Manasseh, see 2 Kings 21:1–10. Manasseh built pagan shrines and altars and placed a sculpture of Asherah in the Temple. *He bowed down to all the host of heaven and worshipped them* (v. 3). The account of Manasseh’s reign in 2 Chronicles 33 is very different, preserving the account of all his sins, while adding an account of his repentance following his exile to Babylon. See verses 12–13: *In his distress, he entreated YHVH his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. He prayed to Him and He granted his prayer, heard his plea, and returned him to Jerusalem to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that YHVH alone was God*. See BT *Sanhedrin* 103a, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai: “Why is it written *He heard him* ויחתר לו (*va-yeḥater lo*)? The verse should read: ויעתר לו (*Va-ye’ater lo*), *He granted his prayer*! [In fact, the verse reads *va-ye’ater* and not *va-yeḥater*, and the Talmud seems to cite a variant reading. In any case, ח (*ḥet*) and ע (*ayin*) are both guttural letters that are not clearly distinguished in some spoken dialects.] This teaches that the blessed Holy One made him a kind of מחתרת (*maḥteret*), opening, in the heavens, in order to receive him in repentance, on account of the attribute of justice [which was preventing him].’” See also *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:11; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 43; *ZḤ* 19d, 23c (both *MhN*); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 280 (134); see also *Ma’aseh de-Rabbi Yehoshu’a ben Levi* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:49); *Seder Gan Eden* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:53); *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:28).

On those whose soul departed at the moment they were aggrieved about their deeds, i.e., they died as they were repenting (as opposed to the perfectly penitent—who

repented earlier in their lifetime), see the story of El'azar son of Dordia in BT *Avodah Zarah* 17a.

See BT *Bava Batra* 75a: "Rabbah said in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan, '… The blessed Holy One will fashion a canopy for each and every [righteous] person befitting his honor.'… Rabbi Ḥanina said, '… Each one will be scorched by the canopy of his fellow. Alas for such shame! Alas for such humiliation!'" See *Zohar* 1:130a, 231b; 2:246b (*Heikh*), 3:196b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 280 (134); idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 374; idem, *Shushan Edut*, 348.

See BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rabbi Abbahu: "In the place where the penitents stand, the completely righteous do not stand." See BT *Sanhedrin* 99a; *Zohar* 1:129b; 2:106a–b, 113b; 3:16b, 202b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 174–75.

The identity of the "seven masters of penitence" is not readily apparent. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 43 names five exemplars of repentance: Ahab, David, Manasseh, Resh Lakish, and Pharaoh. See *Or Yaqar*.

See [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 279 (134), where the penitent also occupy the fifth rung. See also the sixth hall in the additions to *Zohar* 1:41a found in *Or ha-Levanah*, below, page 23.

19. **hall of the pious… hall of the right…** The sixth hall is the hall of the right, i.e., the divine quality of *ḥesed*, "love," and hence the abode of the *Ḥasidim*, "the pious," who loved God. These ascend into the heavenly Garden first. See *Zohar* 2:254b (*Heikh*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1416.

Interestingly, in the second series of halls found in *Or ha-Levanah*'s additions to *Zohar* 1:41a, below, page 23, the sixth hall contains the perfectly penitent, whereas the souls of the pious reside in the seventh hall. See also [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 281 (135).

The “unification” that serves as a prerequisite for attaining this hall may refer to the recitation of the *Shema*, but may also refer to the technique of mystical unification described by Rabbi Shim’on in *Zohar* 1:41a–45b, namely the unification through the halls of prayer.

20. **Abraham… Isaac… Jacob…** Signifying the sefirotic triad *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*.

On Jacob the Consummate, see Genesis 25:27: *The boys grew up. Esau became a skilled hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was* איש תם (*ish tam*), *a simple man, dwelling in tents*. The word *tam* means “simple, innocent, plain, mild, quiet, sound, wholesome, complete, perfect.” *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc. renders it שלים (*shelim*), “complete, perfect, consummate.” Jacob, symbolizing *Tif’eret*, consummates Abraham and Isaac, symbolizing *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. See *Zohar* 1:173b.

On the arousal of the patriarchs, see BT *Bava Metsi’a* 85b. On the patriarchs as intercessors, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §63; BT *Sotah* 34b.

See also Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 27 (32).

21. **a single pillar…** As noted, the halls of the lower Garden of Eden correspond to halls in the celestial Garden of Eden, which in turn reflect the sefirotic realm. The souls ascend via a pillar that links the two Gardens.

The six halls of the lower and upper Gardens—which reflect the six central *sefirot*—are encoded in the opening word of the Torah: בראשית (*Bereshit*), *In the Beginning*, (Genesis 1:1), now read as ברא שית (*bara shit*), “created six,” namely six halls. Cf. BT *Sukkah* 49a; *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 1 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:19); *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 1:1, 11–12; *Zohar* 1:3b, 15b, 56a.

On the pillar, see *Zohar* 1:42a–43a (*Heikh*), 81a (*ST*), 219a; 2:130b, 184b, 210a, 211a, 246b (*Heikh*); 3:185b; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 64a–b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 271, 272, 278, 284

(132–35), 298–99 (139–40); Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 101–42. Cf. *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:28).

The colors green, white, red, and black correspond to *Tif'eret, Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Shekhinah* respectively.

On the seventh hall, see *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:258b–259a (*Heikh*).

22. **two houses... two ה's...** The opening letter of the Torah, ב (*bet*), indicates the number two and בית (*bayit*), "house"; it symbolizes two *sefirot—Binah* above and *Malkhut* below—corresponding to the two ה's (*he*s) of the divine name יהוה (*YHVH*), and with the First and Second Temple respectively. Additionally, the opening letter ב (*bet*) is larger than the other letters and graphically the letter is open on one side, indicating *Binah*'s role as the mother of the lower *sefirot* (the six central *sefirot* comprising *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*). Here *Binah* is signified by *reshit, beginning*, since it is the "first" in the sefirotic edifice. See *Zohar* 1:2a, 29b, 30a–b, 31b.

On the first and second Temples as correlated with *Binah* and *Malkhut* respectively, see *Zohar* 2:9b, 257b–258b (*Heikh*). Cf. the additions at the end of the seventh hall of holiness in *Heikhalot Pequdei*, below, page 175.

On the gates of *Binah*, see the statement attributed to Rav and Shemu'el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a), "Fifty gates of *binah* (understanding) were created in the world, and all were given to Moses except one."

23. **the image in which all images are comprised...** According to Rabbi Yitsḥak, the word *Bereshit* does not indicate *Binah*, but rather points to *Malkhut*, the mirror where the six central *sefirot* manifest. The six *sefirot* are alluded to in the word *Bereshit*, read as *bara shit*, "created six." Though *Malkhut* is the agent responsible for the artistry of the world, the world's true source lies higher in the sefirotic realm, namely with the six central *sefirot*.

The Aramaic word חיזו (*ḥeizu*) means "vision, appearance," but in the *Zohar* also "mirror." This added

sense may derive from the Hebrew word מראה (*mar'ah*), which means "vision, appearance" and "mirror." See *Zohar* 1:88b, 91a, 149b, 183a, 203a.

The full verse from Ezekiel reads: *Like the appearance of the bow in the cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance—the appearance of the semblance of the glory of YHVH. Shekhinah*, the glory of *YHVH*, includes all the other *sefirot*, reflecting their colors. She is the cloud in which appears the divine rainbow, the full sefirotic spectrum. See *Zohar* 1:71b.

On the expression "the image in which all images are comprised," see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 50–51.

On *bara shit*, "created six," see *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 1:1, 11–12; *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 1 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:19), where it is said that the world was created by six letters (the divine names יה [*YH*] and יהוה [*YHVH*]; BT *Sukkah* 49a; *Zohar* 1:3b, 15b.

On praise for the creation of the world residing beyond *Malkhut*, see *Zohar* 1:31b.

24. ***the time of singing has arrived…*** When the six central *sefirot* (the blossoms) appear in *Malkhut* (the earth), She is primed to sing; indeed, She is known as "song."

The interpretation formulated here reverses the rabbinic version in BT *Pesaḥim* 117a: "לדוד מזמור (*Le-David mizmor*), *To David, a psalm* [or: *song*], indicates that *Shekhinah* settled upon him and he exclaimed a song. מזמור לדוד (*Mizmor le-David*), *A psalm to David*, indicates that he exclaimed a song and then *Shekhinah* settled upon him." (The preposition ל [*le*] can correspond to the English prepositions "of" or "to," among others.) Here, according to Rabbi Yose, the wording *Mizmor le-David, A psalm of David*, indicates that *Shekhinah*—known as *mizmor*, a psalm or song—settled upon David and then he sang.

See *Midrash Tehillim* 24:1; Rashi on Psalms 23:1; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 92; Todros

Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 48; *Zohar* 1:67a; 2:50a, 140a, 170a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 378–79.

On Song of Songs 2:12, see *Zohar* 1:1a–b, 97a–b, 215b; 3:4b. As in the preceding paragraph, *glory* indicates *Shekhinah*.

25. **For then the time to praise arrives** Rabbi Ḥiyya's disagreement with Rabbi Yose is not entirely clear. He may be suggesting that *Malkhut*'s song is generated by the fact that the time for song has arrived, rather than the fact that She is filled with the six *sefirot*. In other words, because it is time to sing, She is filled with the six higher rungs. See *Or Yaqar* (*Bereshit* and *Terumah*); *Matoq mi-Devash*.

26. **The upper world is concealed…** The opening verse of Genesis reads: בראשית (*Bereshit*), *In the beginning, Elohim created* את השמים ואת הארץ (*et ha-shamyim ve-et ha-arets*), *the heavens and the earth*. According to Rabbi Abba, the verse encapsulates the dialectic of hiddenness and disclosure so central to the *Zohar*. Thus, when discussing the creation or emanation of the six central *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*—the six supernal days—Scripture merely states בראשית (*Bereshit*), read as ברא שית (*bara shit*), "created six," without specifying a subject. In other words, the source of the six *sefirot* remains hidden, since the upper world (*Binah* and beyond) is hidden. However, when discussing the creation of the lower realms (heaven and earth), Scripture explicitly names the agent of creation—namely *Elohim*, signifying *Malkhut*. See *Sullam* for a different interpretation. See *Zohar* 1:3b, 15a–b.

Some of the witnesses read רומא דכל רומין (*roma de-kol romin*), "height of all heights," in place of יומא דכל יומין (*yoma de-kol yomin*), "day of all days."

The holy name יהוה (*YHVH*) is "concealed" in the sense that it represents a more hidden *sefirah* (*Tif'eret*), and in the sense that it is not pronounced as it is written, but rather as the more "revealed" name אדני (*Adonai*), "My Lord," which refers to a more revealed *sefirah* (*Shekhinah*). On God's name

being both concealed and revealed, see *Zohar* 2:178a (*SdTs*), 230b; 3:65b, 71b, 72a–b, 75a, 98b, 146b, 159a, 289a (*IZ*). See also *Zohar* 1:64b, 232b; 2:227b.

Grammatically speaking, the particle את (*et*) is an accusative marker with no ascertainable independent sense; but Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that when *et* appears in a biblical verse, it amplifies the original meaning. See BT *Pesaḥim* 22b; *Ḥagigah* 12a–b; *Zohar* 1:15b, 29b; 2:90a.

27. **supernal earth, for She has no light of Her own…** According to Rabbi Abba, the *earth* referred to in the second verse of Genesis is *Malkhut*. Initially She was in a state of perfection, but following the diminution of the moon, She has no light save what She receives from the *sefirot* above Her. Though diminished, She is filled with the four foundation elements.

Genesis 1:2 reads in its simple sense: *The earth was chaos and void, and darkness over the face of the abyss, and the wind of God hovering over the face of the waters*. Here, it is construed to mean: Initially the earth (*Malkhut*) was in state of perfection, but now following Her diminution, She is filled with chaos, void, darkness,… and wind—namely the four elements.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:15, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanin: "*The earth was*—it already had been [i.e., it preceded the creation of heaven]." Cf. *Bahir* 2(2); *Zohar* 1:16a, 30a, 262b–263a (*Hash*); 2:176b (*SdTs*).

On the diminution of the moon (*Malkhut*), see BT *Ḥullin* 60b: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Pazzi pointed out a contradiction. 'It is written: *God made the two great lights* (Genesis 1:16), and it is written: *the greater light… and the lesser light* (ibid.). The moon said before the blessed Holy One, "Master of the Universe! Can two kings possibly wear one crown?" He answered, "Go, diminish yourself!" She said before Him, "Master of the Universe! Because I have suggested something proper I should make myself

smaller?” He replied, “Go and rule by day and night.” She said, “But what is the value of this? What good is a lamp at noon?”’” See *Zohar* 1:19b–20a, 31a, 181a–b; *ZḤ* 70d–71a (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 189; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 35b.

The description of *Malkhut* as possessing no light of Her own derives from a medieval astronomic description of the moon. See Radak on Genesis 1:16; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 338; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 381; *Zohar* 1:20a, 31a, 132b, 181a, 238a; 2:43a (*Piq*), 142a, 218b.

The theory of the four elements was introduced by Empedocles and adopted by Plato, Aristotle, and most of their successors. It dominated Western cosmology until the Renaissance. According to this theory, everything below the sphere of the moon is composed of various combinations of fire, air, water, and earth—all of which interact and are capable of transforming into one another.

See Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* 2:1–8; *Sefer Yetsirah* 3:3–4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:10–11; 4:1–6; idem, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:72, 2:30; Moses de León, *Sefer Or Zaru’a*, 267–68; *Zohar* 1:5b, 80a (*ST*); 2:13b, 23b, 254b (*Heikh*); 3:170a. In *MhN* see *ZḤ* 6d, 10a, 13d, 16b; *Zohar* 1:122b.

28. **the abodes of the earth…** Rabbinic literature depicts “seven earths,” namely seven strata of the earth. The order of these strata varies but all include: *Erets* (“earth”), *Adamah* (“earth, ground”), *Arqa* (Aramaic, “earth”), *Gai* (“valley”), *Tsiyyah* (“dry region”), *Neshiyyah* (“oblivion”), *Tevel* (“firm land, world”). Our world, which is called *Tevel*, is distinguished by judgment *with righteousness*, which in the *Zohar* is a symbol for the *Shekhinah*. Here the “abodes” are depicted as one beneath the other—rather than seven zones on the surface of the earth (as with the “seven climates,” the seven inhabitable regions recognized in

Ptolemaic and medieval geography). See *Sefer Yetsirah* 4:12; Ibn Ezra on Genesis 1:2; *Zohar* 1:177a; 2:30b.

As becomes clear below, just as the earth has seven "abodes," so the supernal earth, *Malkhut*, has seven "abodes."

On the levels of the earth, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:11; *Ester Rabbah* 1:12; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:10; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:11; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 37; B, 43; *Sefer Yetsirah* 4:12; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 6:4; *Midrash Mishlei* 8:9; *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit* 9 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:24); *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:32–33); *Zohar* 1:9b, 54b, 157a, 253b (*Hash*); 2:30b, 50a, 100a; 3:9b–10a; *ZḤ* 8c–9b (*SO*), 12a (*MhN*), 87b (*MhN, Rut*). See also Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 4b.

On the significance of the accusative particle *et*, see above, note 26.

29. **the site of Hell...** Just as צלמות (*tsalmavet*), *deep darkness* (or *Shadow of Death*), in the verse in Jeremiah indicates Hell, so does *Tsiyyah*. On *Tsalmavet* as a name of Hell, see BT *Eruvin* 19a; *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*). On Hell as darkness, see also *Zohar* 1:213b.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 2:4: "*And darkness over the face of the abyss*—this is death, which darkens the face of creatures." See *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 4; *Zohar* 2:149b; 3:99b (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 80c (*MhN, Rut*).

On תהו (*tohu*), *chaos*, cf. *Zohar* 1:16a: "*Tohu*—a colorless, formless realm, not embraced by the mystery of form." According to the *Bahir* 2(2) and numerous Zoharic passages, בהו (*bohu*), *void*, is interpreted as בו הוא (*bo hu*), "in it is something," i.e., something with substance, as opposed to chaos. Hence *Arqa*, which corresponds to *bohu*, is not forgotten.

On *Arqa*, see *Zohar* 1:9b, 54b, 157a.

30. **Rabbi Ḥiyya said...** According to Rabbi Ḥiyya, *void* indicates *Gai*, not *Arqa*; and *wind* (or *spirit*) indicates *Tevel*, our world—sustained by *Malkhut*. Oddly, how *Erets* and *Adamah* are

derived from Genesis 1:2 is not explained. See *Or Yaqar* (*Terumah*); *Sullam*.

31. **Likewise for the supernal earth…** As there are seven "abodes" of the earth below, so *Malkhut* has seven "abodes." The precise location of these abodes is not clear and the commentators differ. See *Or Yaqar* (*Bereshit* and *Terumah*); Ḥayyim Vital, *Ets Ḥayyim* 46:2; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. The commentators also attribute various sefirotic attributions to the seven abodes. See *Or Yaqar* (*Terumah*); *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

It is also not clear who is speaking here. Perhaps it is Rabbi Ḥiyya or perhaps Rabbi Abba. In light of Rabbi Shim'on's statement toward the beginning of *Zohar* 1:41a (below, page 21), it also possible to construe him as the speaker.

The phrase "so too below" may refer either to the seven abodes of the earth, or alternatively to the seven abodes of Hell, on which see BT *Sotah* 10b; *Eruvin* 19a; *Midrash Tehillim* 11:6. See *Zohar* 2:263a–68b (*Heikh*).

32. **First abode…** The first three abodes of *Malkhut* contain menacing angels. The first abode may correlate with *tohu*, *chaos*, hence no form. See above, note 29.

"Quaestors" renders קסטירי (*qastirei*). The rabbinic term קוסטור (*qustor*) derives from *quaestor*, a Roman official or prosecutor. See JT *Eruvin* 6:2, 23b; *Zohar* 1:19b, 53b; 2:58b; 3:13a. *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 188 relates the Zoharic term to the rabbinic קוסטינר (*qustinar*), which derives from the Latin *quaestionarius*, "torturer, executioner." Cf. *Derekh Emet*; see also *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 186.

On the angel *Tohari'el*, whose name derives from the root טהר (*thr*), "pure," see *Sidrei de-Shimmusha Rabba* (ed. Scholem), 123; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 268 (131); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 403; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:245a (*Heikh*), 263a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). Cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, § 427.

On vanishing angels, see BT *Ḥagigah* 14a: “Shemu’el said to Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Rav, ‘O son of a lion! Come, I will tell you one of those fine words said by your father: Every single day ministering angels are created from the river of fire, chant a song, then cease to be, as is said: *New every morning, immense is Your faithfulness!* (Lamentations 3:23).”

See also *Shemot Rabbah* 15:6: “The angels are renewed every day, praise the blessed Holy One, and then return to the river of fire from which they emerged, and God renews and restores them to their former condition, as is said: *New every morning*, [*immense is Your faithfulness!*] (Lamentations 3:23).”

See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:1; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:8; *Zohar* 1:17b, 18b–19a, 40b (*Heikh*), 42a (*Heikh*), 44a–b (*Heikh*); 2:144b, 247a (*Heikh*); *Sidrei de-Shimmusha Rabba* (ed. Scholem), 123–24; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 296 (139); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 205; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 65; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:624–25. On the phrase, “they are annihilated and are not found,” see BT *Sanhedrin* 111a.

“No impression of form at all” renders צורה גו כלל סורטא דלאו ביה (*de-lav bei tsurah go kelal surta*), literally “not containing form within *surta* at all.” *Surta* is difficult, though apparently here is related to סרטא (*serita*), “mark, incision.” See *Tosefta Shabbat* 11:6; *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:7; cf. *Zohar* 1:132b; 3:63b, 130a (*IR*); *ZḤ* 1b (*SO*).

See *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:30).

33. **Second abode…** Perhaps correlating with *bohu*, “void.”

On the angels of this abode as being proximate to human beings, cf. Maimonides’ comments in *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:7 on the *ishim*, the lowest rung of angels whose “level is close to the level of human knowledge.” See *Or Yaqar* (*Terumah*); *Nitsotsei Orot*; Mopsik.

On the angel *Qadumi'el*, whose name derives from the root קדם (*qdm*), "before, early, east," see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:246a (*Heikh*); 3:2b; *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*).

The *Qedushah*, "Sanctification," featuring Isaiah 6:3 (*Holy, holy, holy is YHVH of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory*), appears three times in the morning liturgy: once before the *Shema*, when the angels' recitation *of Holy, holy, holy…* is described; during the repetition of the *Amidah*, when the angels join Israel in sanctifying God; and in the prayer "A redeemer shall come to Zion" after the *Amidah*. The main *Qedushah* is recited during the repetition of the morning and afternoon *Amidah*. Similarly, the third prayer of the *Amidah* (recited three times a day) refers to the "holy ones praising You every day." See *Zohar* 2:247a–b (*Heikh*). According to a rabbinic tradition, the angels do not sanctify God's name in heaven until Israel sanctifies it on earth. See BT *Ḥullin* 91b: "The ministering angels do not utter song above until Israel sings below." See *Zohar* 1:90a (*ST*), 231a; 2:129a–b, 164b; 3:66a, 190b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 72–73, 91. On the *Qedushah* prayer, see *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, 596.

34. **Third abode…** Correlated with darkness and Hell. The image of the river of fire derives from Daniel 7:10: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him, a myriad of myriads attending Him*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 13b: "Where does the river of fire pour forth? Rabbi Zutra son of Toviah said in the name of Rav, 'Upon the heads of the wicked in Hell.'" See *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:1; *Zohar* 1:11b, 33a.

According to *Derekh Emet*, the slander-repelling remedy is *teshuvah*. Here Samael signifies Satan.

35. **Fourth abode…** Perhaps correlated with "wind" (or "spirit") from Genesis 1:2.

The simple sense of the verset in Psalms, עושה מלאכיו רוחות (*oseh mal'akhav ruḥot*), is *He makes winds His messengers*. Here, the construal of the verb's direct object and indirect

object are interchanged, which evokes other senses of those words: *He makes his angels spirits*. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4; *Tanḥuma, Ḥayyei Sarah* 3; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:4; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 77; *Zohar* 1:81a (*ST*), 101a, 144a; 2:10a, 98b, 173a, 229b; 3:126b, 152a; *ZḤ* 10a (*MhN*), 81b (*MhN, Rut*).

On human perception of the invisible angels through heightened awareness or great contemplation, see *Zohar* 1:34a.

On the angel *Pad'el*, whose name apparently derives from the root פדה (*pdh*), "redeem," see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit* 37 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:40); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §717; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*), 149b (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:249a (*Heikh*).

On opening gates and ushering in prayers, cf. *Zohar* 2:245b (*Heikh*). On the burning and renewal of angels, see above, note 32.

36. **Fifth abode...** Angels of *Ḥesed* and *Din*, respectively "Love" and "Judgment," function in tandem in this abode: angels of judgment sing at midnight; angels of love, at dawn.

According to the *Zohar*, at midnight God delights in the souls of the righteous. See *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai*, 3:3, 111b; *Zohar* 1:10b, 60b, 72a, 77a–b, 82b, 92a–b, 132b, 136b, 178b, 231b; 2:18b (*MhN*), 46a, 130a–b, 136a, 173b, 195b–196a; 3:21b–22b, 52b, 193a; *ZḤ* 13c (*MhN*); Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 146–50; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 121–145. On the north wind blowing at midnight, see BT *Berakhot* 3b; *Yevamot* 72a.

On the angel *Qadashi'el*, whose name derives from the root קדש (*qdsh*), "holy," see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 3:3a; *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). Cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, § 427.

37. **Sixth abode...** Numerous forces (symbolized by ships, rivers, streams, and fish) convey emanation from the

sea of *Shekhinah* to the worlds below. See *Derekh Emet*. See *Zohar* 1:34b, 124a; 2:30a, 30b, 48b, 50b, 54a, 56a.

According to *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:10 the four angels, Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael are aligned with the four cardinal points: "Just as the blessed Holy One created the four cardinal directions and four standards [of the tribes] corresponding to them, so also did He set about His throne four angels—Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael." See also *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4; the liturgy of the bedtime *Shema*; *Zohar* 1:97b (*ST*); 2:147a, 254a (*Heikh*); 3:118b, 154b–155a; *ZḤ* 13a–b (*MhN*). The four directions (south, north, east, and west) are often correlated with the sefirotic quartet, *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*, respectively.

There appears to be some confusion in the manuscripts and printed editions regarding the location of the four archangels. See *Matoq mi-Devash*. See the description of the sixth hall in *Zohar* 2:254a (*Heikh*), which likewise depicts the four archangels.

38. **Seventh abode...** In contrast to the six preceding abodes, there are no angels here. See the description of *Aravot*, the seventh and highest of the heavens enumerated in BT *Ḥagigah* 12b: "*Aravot* is where are righteousness, justice, charity, treasuries of life, treasuries of peace, treasuries of blessings, the souls (*neshamot*) of the righteous, and the spirits and souls (*ruḥot* and *neshamot*) that are to be created in the future, and the dew with which the blessed Holy One will revive the dead."

Precisely how this seventh abode articulates with the seven halls at the beginning of this unit (also portrayed as celestial residences of the souls) is unclear. Is this abode a portal to the halls? Or are the halls located within this seventh abode? Perhaps M.C. Escher's 1953 lithograph print "Relativity"—with its fusing staircases—should serve as our paradigm here.

39. **species resembling human beings…** On the seven abodes of the earth below, see note 28. On the strange creatures of the lower strata, see *Zohar* 1:9b, 157a; 2:80a–b; 3:10a; *ZḤ* 9b (*SO*).

40. **within are seven halls…** Again, how the halls that follow (situated within the abodes) articulate with the first series of halls in this unit is not clear. See *Nitsotsei Orot*: "Know that these halls within the abodes are not the halls mentioned at *Zohar* 1:38a. They are different." See *Or Yaqar* (*Terumah*); Scholem; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. Whatever the case, these seven halls correspond to the seven heavens enumerated in BT *Ḥagigah* 12b. Cf. *Sidrei de-Shimmusha Rabba* (ed. Scholem), 122–26.

In the Cremona edition, the description of these halls appears in *Parashat Va-Yaqhel*, 355 (equivalent of *Zohar* 2:202b) and they are not associated with the preceding account. These halls are also absent from *Or Yaqar, Bereshit*, though they are found, as here, in *Or Yaqar*, *Terumah*. As for the manuscript witnesses: O16, V6, V12, M8 do not contain them here, though N23 does.

41. **First hall…** On the souls of converts in the first hall, see *Zohar* 1:38b (*Heikh*; above, p. 7 and n. 9).

On the angel *Raḥami'el*, whose name derives from the root רחם (*rḥm*), "compassion, womb," see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 38 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§359, 716, 771; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:245b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*).

42. **Second hall…** On the heavenly fate of children, see [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 280–81 (134–135); *Zohar* 1:38b (*Heikh*); 2:248b (*Heikh*). See also BT *Avodah Zarah* 3b; *Zohar* 2:113b; *ZḤ* 36b.

On the angel *Ahina'el*, whose name is obscure, though apparently related to the verb מהנה (*mehaneh*), "delight, pleasure" (see *Or Yaqar* [*Terumah*]; *Sullam*), see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:246a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*).

43. **Third hall…** The wicked who intended to turn back to God but never fulfilled this in their lifetime are punished in Hell, but then rise from there. Their blemish, however, prevents them from attaining total bliss, and they remain "children of flesh," apparently suggesting that they not attain the requisite level of ethereal spirituality. Furthermore, they bask only on new moons and Sabbaths. For a different interpretation of "children of flesh," see *Or Yaqar, Matoq mi-Devash, Sullam*.

On intending or contemplating *teshuvah*, see BT *Gittin* 57b, *Qiddushin* 49b; *Zohar* 2:150a; 3:220b; *ZḤ* 79c (*MhN, Rut*); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 267 (131). Cf. BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16b–17a, in the name of the House of Shammai: "There are three groups at the Day of Judgment: one of the completely righteous, one of the completely wicked, and one of the intermediate. The completely righteous are written and sealed immediately for life; the completely wicked are written and sealed immediately for Hell…; the intermediate go down to Hell and squeal [or: chirp, twitter, squawk—on account of their punishment], and rise."

On the angel *Adrahina'el*, whose name is obscure, though apparently related to the verb אהדר (*ahadar*), "return" (see *Or Yaqar* [*Terumah*]; *Sullam*); cf. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 401; *Zohar* 2:246b (*Heikh*).

On the verse from Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:62b, where it is used to describe the abating of the suffering of the wicked in Hell on Sabbaths and new moons.

44. **Fourth hall…** On the purple robe of the King and the verse from Psalms, see *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*; above, p. 9 and n. 16).

The name *Gedaryah'el* apparently derives from the root גדר (*gdr*), "enclose, distinguish." See *Sullam*. This name does not appear elsewhere in the *Zohar*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:202a, 255b (*Heikh*); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §716.

45. **Fifth hall…** As discussed in note 40, these halls are absent from most of the manuscripts. Mantua, Cremona, *Or Yaqar* (*Terumah*), and N23 do treat them, though the texts are fragmentary—garbling the fifth hall and lacking the sixth and seventh halls entirely. My rendering here follows the emendations of *Or ha-Levanah*.

"Bitten-souls" renders נשמתין דטריקין (*nishmatin di-triqin*), perhaps referring to the barely guilty who were nevertheless smitten by the serpent, the angel of death. See BT *Shabbat* 110a. See also *Seder Gan Eden* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:53).

The angel *Adiri'el*, whose name is derived from the word אדיר (*adir*), "great, powerful, noble," is not attested elsewhere in the *Zohar*. Cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §427.

46. **Sixth hall…** On the hall of the perfectly penitent, see *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*; above, p. 10 and n. 18), in the fifth hall.

On the angel *Tsadqi'el*, derived from צדק (*tsedeq*), "justice," see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 38 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §718; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*), 149b (*ST*); 2:247a (*Heikh*); 3:2b, 154a, 234a; *ZḤ* 64a, 68c (both *ShS*).

47. **Seventh hall…** On the hall of the pious, see *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*; above, p. 11 and n. 19), in the sixth hall. Michael, the head archangel, is associated with *Ḥesed*, "love," and hence appointed over the *ḥasidim*, "pious ones."

עלמא דאתי (*Alma de-atei*), "The world that is coming," is the Aramaic equivalent of the rabbinic Hebrew העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*). This term has often been understood as referring to the hereafter and often been translated as "the world to come." From another point of view, however, "the world that is coming" already exists, occupying another dimension. See *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8: "The wise call it *ha-olam ha-ba* not because it does not exist now, but for us today in this world it is still to come." See Maimonides, *Mishneh*

Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah 8:8; and Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, 37: "'The world to come' does not succeed 'this world' in time, but exists from eternity as a reality outside and above time, to which the soul ascends." In the *Zohar*, it often denotes the flow emerging from *Binah*.

I have omitted the very brief passage found here in *Or ha-Levanah* that does not seem relevant to the halls.

48. **arrange the prayer…** Here begins the main portion of the Zoharic exposition of the *heikhalot*, "halls." Unlike the preceding halls and abodes, the halls portrayed here in *Parashat Be-Reshit* do not appear to be celestial residences for the souls post mortem. Rather, they designate a realm located beneath the *sefirot* (and beneath *Malkhut* in particular) and through which prayer passes. The desire and aspiration of prayer traverses through these halls, uniting various celestial forces. It culminates in the unification of the realm of the halls with the world of the *sefirot*, engendering the union of the masculine and feminine potencies within God. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:591–94, 597–614: "The halls are situated below the *sefirot*, and they act as a kind of bridge between the forces of emanation and the material cosmos. In relation to the upper world, they are seen as 'garments' of the *sefirot*, for in each one of them a particular *sefirah* is revealed and active. In relation to the lower world they are seen as the upper firmaments matching the seven lower firmaments" (p. 591). In *Or Yaqar* (*Terumah*, 166) Moses Cordovero describes them as "branches through which divinity extends" and notes that "they are beneath the Throne of Glory in the mystery of the world of *Yetsirah*, Formation, the world of angels in which are the ten *sefirot* of Formation" (idem, 163). Later commentators locate the halls in the world of Creation. See also Wolfson, *Luminal Darkness*, 119–21. According to Tishby and Wolfson, these halls are in the upper Garden of Eden, though this is stated categorically only in *Heikhalot Pequdei*. The halls described here in

Parashat Be-Reshit are quoted, expanded, elaborated, and rewritten (with significant differences) in *Parashat Pequdei* (*Zohar* 2:244b–262b). In the Cremona edition, these halls are found in *Parashat Va-Yaqhel*, 355 (equivalent of *Zohar* 2:202b).

On Moses's lengthy and short prayers, see BT *Berakhot* 34a: "Our Rabbis taught: Once a certain disciple went down before the Ark in the presence of Rabbi Eli'ezer, and he lengthened [the prayer] excessively. His disciples said to him, 'Master, how longwinded this fellow is!' He replied to them, 'Is he lengthening it more than our master Moses, of whom is written [*I threw myself before YHVH*] *the forty days and the forty nights*… (Deuteronomy 9:25)?' Another time it happened that a certain disciple went down before the Ark in the presence of Rabbi Eli'ezer, and he shortened excessively. His disciples said to him, 'How concise this fellow is!' He replied to them, 'Is he any more concise than our master Moses, as it is written: *God, pray, heal her, pray* (Numbers 12:13)?'" See also *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 3; *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; BT *Berakhot* 11a; *Zohar* 2:244b–245a (*Heikh*), 259b (*Heikh*); *Zohar* 1:24b (*Tiq*).

49. **bind the bond… actualize total union… open openings…** Rabbi Shim'on begins with a stunning description of the purpose of prayer. As will become clearer below, the halls must be "arranged," i.e., the various forces within them linked and united, so as to affect the union of the halls with the *sefirot* and enable the union of male and female within God. See *Zohar* 2:244b (*Heikh*).

See *Or Yaqar* (*Terumah*, 162): "From here it follows that the reception of prayer is not dependent on piety alone, but on knowledge of the arrangement of prayer… concerning the ascent of prayer through its levels, namely knowledge of the supernal rungs."

For other references to "books of the ancients," one of the many sources housed in the real or imagined library of the author(s) of the *Zohar*, see *Zohar* 1:10a, 34b, 180b,

184a, 220a, 234b; 2:35a, 95b, 239a; 3:6b, 10a, 19a, 26b, 93a (*Piq*), 249b, 258b, 288a (*IZ*).

On "sweetening" (or "assuaging, perfuming") God, cf. Exodus 32:11: *Moses sweetened* [or: *soothed, softened*] *the face of YHVH his God*. On prayer splitting firmaments and opening gates, see *Zohar* 2:201a–202b. On abolishing decrees, see *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*; below, page 50).

On "seducing" (or "appeasing") God, see *Midrash Tehillim* 19:17: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai taught, 'How mighty are the righteous, for they know how to seduce their Creator!" See also *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:4; *Zohar* 3:121a.

The companions seduce God by adorning *Shekhinah*, thereby arousing the masculine potency within God to unite with the feminine.

50. **uncover the dust from your eyes, O Abraham the pious...** Rabbi Shim'on invokes Abraham חסידא (*ḥasida*), "the pious" (associated with the right side, *Ḥesed*, "Love"), to whom the mysteries of the halls of prayer were revealed. According to rabbinic tradition, Abraham established the morning prayer (see BT *Berakhot* 26b). Cf. *Zohar* 2:245a (*Heikh*), where Rabbi Shim'on addresses Adam.

On the phrase "Who will uncover the dust from your eyes," see M *Sotah* 5:2; *Bereshit Rabbah* 21:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 25:2; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 8; Scholem, "Parashah Ḥadashah," 433; *Zohar* 2:262b (*Heikh*). The sense of the phrase is: would that you were still living!

51. **lower spirit with higher spirit...** See *Zohar* 2:244b (*Heikh*): "all the arrangements follow a single principle: so that low can be comprised in high." The task of prayer (uttered in a whisper) is the binding, fusing, integration, incorporation, and ascent of the diverse celestial forces that populate the halls. Each hall has a chief spirit, which by virtue of a kabbalist's prayers encompasses and comprises the forces found in that hall, so that the spirit may ascend to the next hall.

52. **First hall…** In which the *sefirot Yesod* and *Malkhut* are revealed and active. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:245b–246a, 258a, 260a (all *Heikh*). On *Livnat ha-Sappir*, see also [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 271, 275 (132–33).

Exodus 24:10 reads in full: *They saw the God of Israel, and beneath His feet was like a fashioning of sapphire pavement and like the essence of heaven for purity*. This verse describes a vision experienced by Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel. The second part of the verse is expounded as referring to the first three halls: *sapphire pavement*—the first hall; *essence of heaven*—second hall; *purity*—third hall. The first hall—*sapphire pavement*, which comprises the two spirits *Sappira* and *Livnat*, "Sapphire" and "Pavement" respectively—lies beneath the feet of the God, beneath the halls of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. The first spirit of this hall, *Sappira*, correlated with *Yesod*, is itself composed of two lights: one white and one red—corresponding to the attributes of love and judgment respectively. The first light ascends to the six extremities of the *sefirot*. The second light (consisting of four lights that are one) is "concealed and revealed," i.e., sometime hidden and sometimes revealed. See *Or Yaqar, Sullam, Matoq mi-Devash* for various interpretations.

"Sapphire" appears in the context of Ezekiel's vision of the chariot-throne. See Ezekiel 1:26: *Above the expanse over their heads—appearance of sapphire, semblance of a throne. And upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it, above*. See Ezekiel 10:1: *I looked, and on the expanse over the heads of the cherubs, there was something like a sapphire stone; an appearance resembling a throne could be seen over them*.

See Radak on Isaiah 54:11: "*Sapphire*—The Gaon Rav Saadia explained that it is a white stone, and the wise Rabbi Abraham wrote that it is red." See Abraham Ibn Ezra on Exodus 24:10. Targum Onqelos renders *livnat ha-sappir* as "precious stone."

The phrase *like the gleam of burnished bronze* derives from Ezekiel's description of the legs of the creatures carrying the sapphire divine throne. The same expression is used by Daniel (10:6) in describing the arms and feet of the celestial being who appeared to him.

On sapphirine radiance, cf. *Zohar* 2:136b. On the verse from Exodus, see also *Zohar* 2:66b.

On the motif of many lights comprising one light, see BT *Berakhot* 52b and Rashi, s.v. *harbeh me'orot*.

53. **a spirit called לבנת (*Livnat*), Pavement...** The word *Livnat* also points to לבנה (*levanah*), "white, moon." This is the spirit of *Malkhut*. The fusion of the two spirits of the hall generates *Livnat ha-Sappir*. Like *Sappira* (from which it derives), the spirit *Livnat* also comprises white and red (Love and Judgment)—though here they exist together rather than as two separate lights as in *Sappira*. (In the *Zohar, Malkhut* is often described as red-and-white.) The two spirits of the hall correspond to the two lower firmaments of the seven firmaments described in BT *Ḥagigah* 12b (cf. *Or Yaqar*); they also signify *Malkhut* and *Yesod*. The verse in Genesis is from Pharaoh's dream of the lean cows consuming the healthy cows. See *Zohar* 2:246a (*Heikh*). See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

54. **From these two sparkling spirits...** As noted, the halls are filled with diverse celestial forces—including living beings, *ophanim, galgalim*, and *seraphim*, drawn from Ezekiel's vision of the chariot (chaps. 1 and 10) and Isaiah's vision of God in the celestial Temple (chap. 6). The *ophanim* are created by the fusion of the two spirits of the hall; they emerge from and are sustained by the "holy spirit"—the spirit *Livnat*, representing *Malkhut*. *Brightness*, signifying the female spirit, illuminates *fire*, which signifies the *ophanim, burning coals of fire*. See *Zohar* 2:246a (*Heikh*).

Ezekiel 1:16 reads: *The appearance of the wheels and their design were like topaz and all four had the same*

shape; their appearance and design were as of one wheel being inside the other wheel.

55. **When spirit fuses with spirit…** Again, the union of the two spirits of the first hall generates a "living being." The living being is described as having a lion's face, signifying Love, and the wings of an eagle, apparently signifying Judgment. See *Zohar* 2:246a (*Heikh*).

In Ezekiel's vision, each of the four living beings carrying the heavenly throne had four faces; see Ezekiel 1:10: *The image of their face was a human face* [in front], *and on the right the four of them had a lion's face, and on the left the four of them had an ox's face, and the four of them had an eagle's face* [in back]. See *Zohar* 2:80b; *ZḤ* 31a–b. See also Daniel 7:4 where one of the living beings arising from the sea is described as *like a lion with eagle's wings*.

The number 1300 refers to the twelve supports plus the spirit *Sappira* (or the fused spirit *Livnat ha-Sappir*) that sustains all, totaling thirteen. See *Zohar* 1:42b (*Heikh*). Cf. *Matoq mi-Devash* for a different interpretation.

In Ezekiel, the terms *ophanim* and *galgalim* denote the wheels and spheres of the divine chariot-throne. Here, as in the classical *Heikhalot* corpus, they are also classes of angels.

56. **Each of these four *ophanim*, wheels…** The arrangement is as follows: living being above *ophanim* above *galgalim* (spheres). The verse from Exodus refers to the Dwelling in the desert. See *Zohar* 2:246b (*Heikh*). On the four sides of the living being, see previous note.

According to ancient philosophy the heavenly spheres generate harmonious music as they move. On the "sweet voice" (or "melodious sound") of the heavenly spheres, see *Zohar* 1:42b (*Heikh*), 161b (*ST*), 233b (*Tos*); 2:196a, 211a; 3:165a, 209a; *ZḤ* 6a (*MhN*); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 272 (132). Cf. BT *Yoma* 20b.

57. **gaze toward this hall; from there they are nourished…** As noted, the halls are intermediary between the world of emanation and the material cosmos; they serve as conduits for the flow of emanation. The various forces within the first hall gaze upon the spirit *Livnat-ha-Sappir*, thereby receiving its bounty. See *Zohar* 2:246b (*Heikh*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:242a. See also Ezekiel 1:20.

Saturn is the seventh of the "seven planets" (counting the moon and the sun), situated in the seventh sphere, and hence appropriate for the first (seventh from the top) hall. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:1.

Interestingly, the planets are absent from *Heikhalot Pequdei*. In *Heikhalot Bereshit* the sixth and seventh hall are not associated with planetary bodies; hence Mercury and the Moon do not figure.

58. **like sunlight in water…** The combined spirit *Livnat ha-Sappir* flits about like the rays of the sun dancing on water, attainable only through the intention of prayer. The light wraps itself within the prayer—poised to ascend to the next hall, to fuse with the spirit there.

On sunlight and water as metaphors for the ephemerality of mystical experience, see *Zohar* 2:246b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 39d; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 89–90 (113): "If you take a bowl of water and place it in the sunlight and ripple it, you will find on the wall a radiance like shining mirrors flashing back and forth. The light moves so fast, no one can detain it" (trans. Matt, *Essential Kabbalah*, 202). See also idem, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 380a, published by Gershom Scholem, "Eine unbekannte mystische Schrift des Moses de León," 118–119 n. 5 (translated in Matt, *Essential Kabbalah*, 114); idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah le-Rabbi Moshe de León*, 67; Idel, *New Perspectives*, 140; idem, "Le-gilguleiah shel tekhniqah qedumah"; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 381. The play of light and the experience of light are crucial to

the mystical experience seemingly underlying the *Heikhalot* of the *Zohar*. See below, note 61.

59. **This comprising-spirit contains…** The aspiration of prayer brings about the incorporation of the various celestial forces of the hall in the spirit *Livnat ha-Sappir*, which comprises them all.

On fire linking with water, and south with north, etc., see *Zohar* 1:42b (*Heikh*; below, page 33); 2:24a–b; 261b (*Heikh*).

60. **pillar is thrust…** By means of which the spirit ascends to the next hall. See note 21. On the verse from Ecclesiastes, see *Zohar* 1:42b (*Heikh*; below, page 33); 2:246b (*Heikh*).

61. **Second hall…** In which the *sefirah Hod* is revealed and active. Like the first hall, the second hall (corresponding to *essence of heaven*) contains two spirits: on the right, *Zohar*, "Radiance," the unchanging essence; and on the left, "Heaven." See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:246b–247a (*Heikh*). See also 2:66b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 282 (135).

The description of "the concealment of the eye—which as it rolls radiates and sparkles in its revolution" alludes to a technique for seeing the concealed colors of the *sefirot*. By closing one's eye and pressing a finger on the eyeball until it is moved to one side, one gains a vision of colors. See *Zohar* 2:23b: "The secret is: close your eye and roll your eyeball. Those colors that shine and sparkle will be revealed." Though not stated explicitly in our passage, it seems likely that this technique underwrites the experience presented in this unit. Here the point is that just as the hidden colors are seen only when the eye is stimulated, so the spirit of the second hall shines only when stimulated by the spirit of the first hall below. When the eye is closed, the white of the eye joins with a finer color above it, which enables the hidden light to shine. See *Or Yaqar*.

On this mystical technique, see *Zohar* 1:18b, 43a–b (*Heikh*), 97a–b (*ST*); 2:43b (*Piq*), 69a, 247a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 63b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 96–97 (123–24); idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah le-Rabbi Moshe de León*, 67; Scholem, "Colours and Their Symbolism," 66–67; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 291–93; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 380–83.

62. **This spirit revolves through the spirit below…** The spirit of the second hall is activated by the spirit of the first hall. When illuminated, it encompasses the light of the first hall (the comprising-light, comprising many colors) and animates a second light on the left, the spirit Heaven. The verse from the Song of Songs alludes to both lights in the second hall—*the curves of your thighs*, in the plural. In the *Zohar*, thighs signify the *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:247a (*Heikh*), 258a (*Heikh*).

63. **They coalesce… and are called… the Essence of Heaven…** As in the first hall, the spirit of the left (Heaven) fuses with the spirit of the right (*Zohar*, "Essence"). The white of the spirit Heaven joins with the white of the spirit *Zohar*; and the blue of the spirit Heaven, signifying judgment, joins with the red of the spirit *Livnat* in the first hall. Whereas the first spirit of the second hall *Zohar* is white, an unchanging essence, the second spirit (Heaven), is composite—containing the parallel pairings blue and white, Judgment and Love, אש (*esh*), "fire," and מים (*mayim*), "water"—hence שמים (*shamayim*), "heaven." Blue and white are also the colors of the visible heavens. See *Zohar* 2:247a (*Heikh*). See *Bereshit Rabbah* 4:7, in the name of Rav: "The blessed Holy One took אש (*esh*), fire, and מים (*mayim*), water, mixed them with one another, and from them שמים (*shamayim*), heavens, were made." See also BT *Ḥagigah* 12a.

64. **with six because they all hail from the Essence of Heaven…** Apparently this is so because the Essence of Heaven is the sixth hall, counting from top to bottom.

Alternatively, when the two halls are combined, there are six kinds of lights or colors: Two in *Sappira* (red and white); one in *Livnat* (red and white combined); one in *Zohar*-Essence (white); two in Heaven (blue and white). See *Or Yaqar, Sullam, Matoq Mi-Devash*.

The six-winged *seraphim* (whose name means "burning ones") burn those who do not show "concern" for God's glory—which is understood here as exploiting the crown of Torah by improperly treating scholars of Scripture and the six orders of Mishnah. The focus on the six orders of Mishnah is significant, since the task of mystic prayer in the *Heikhalot* is to *order six* halls, so that the seventh hall can receive the *Shekhinah*.

See M *Avot* 1:13, in the name of Hillel: "He who makes worldly use of the crown [of Torah] shall perish." See also *Avot de-Rabbi Natan*, A 12; BT *Megillah* 28b. See *Zohar* 2:247a–b (*Heikh*).

On not showing concern for God's glory, see M *Ḥagigah* 2:1; BT *Qiddushin* 40a. On the *seraphim* sanctifying God, see Isaiah 6:3.

65. **lower *seraphim*...** Signifying the malevolent forces of the Other Side, derived from the primordial serpent of Genesis 3. They are subdued by the movement of the upper *seraphim* in this hall. In the Bible, *seraph* is a synonym for "snake, serpent." See Numbers 21:6; Deuteronomy 8:15; Isaiah 14:29, 30:6.

Here, the living beings are eagles. In the first hall, the living being is a lion. See Ezekiel 1:10. The verse from Proverbs describes the living being, the eagle, in the hall called Essence of Heaven.

See *Zohar* 2:247b, 248b (both *Heikh*).

66. **This spirit rules over all...** Namely, the comprised spirit Essence of Heaven. The living being looks above to the third hall, and in turn the four beings and *seraphim* look to the living being—entering beneath its wings to ascend to the next hall. The movement of the *seraphim* burns the

singing angelic hosts. See *Zohar* 2:247b (*Heikh*). On angels being burned and renewed, see 1:40a (*Heikh*; above, p. 17 and n. 32).

67. **These four beings…** The four beings are a throne for the living being, surrounding it on all sides, which is illuminated by the spirit of the hall. Each of the four beings has four spheres; and each sphere, three supports (see *Zohar* 1:41b [*Heikh*]). The spheres face the center of the structure (perhaps suggesting the location of the spirit), which "opens and closes," i.e., either propels or restrains. See *Or Yaqar*, who suggests that the number four indicates *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*, and the number three *Ḥesed, Din*, and *Raḥamim*. Cf. *Matoq mi-Devash* for a different interpretation. See *Zohar* 2:247b (*Heikh*).

On the center as opening and closing, cf. Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 34 (41); idem, *Shushan Edut*, 336.

On the voice heard throughout the firmaments, see *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*; above, p. 28 and n. 56).

The wheels below might merely be a synonym for the spheres, or alternatively they might refer to the wheels in the first hall.

68. **propelled by the desire of the nexus of unity of prayer…** As prayer enters the hall it animates, elevates, and unites the diverse celestial forces within the spirit Essence of Heaven. The spirit of the second hall merges with and contains the spirit of the first hall and ascends to the third hall.

Jupiter is the sixth of the "seven planets" (counting the moon and the sun), situated in the sixth sphere. Hence it is appropriate for the second (sixth from the top) hall. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:1.

On the linkages of fire and water, east and west, etc.—which in the *Zohar* often indicate the sefirotic quarter, *Ḥesed* (water, south), *Gevurah* (fire, north), *Tif'eret* (air, east), *Malkhut* (dust, west)—see above at note 59.

69. **Here pertains kneeling…** The second through sixth halls culminate with a specific prayer posture. See *Zohar* 1:43b, 44a, 44b, 45a (all *Heikh*). See also the additions to the seventh hall of holiness in *Heikhalot Pequdei*, below, page 175. Whereas *Heikhalot Pequdei* refers to particular prayers (*Zohar* 2:260b–261b), *Heikhalot Bereshit* does not specify. The reference to these prayer postures combined with the reference to Abraham at the beginning of the unit would seem to suggest the ascent of prayer described here occurs during the *Amidah* of *Shaḥarit*, the morning prayer. On kneeling during prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 34a–b; *Megillah* 22b; *Shevu'ot* 16b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:10, 12–14. See also Avraham Maimuni, *Sefer ha-Maspiq le-Ovdey Hashem*, 117–47. According to Cordovero in *Or Yaqar*, kneeling is appropriate here since the knees are symbol for *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*.

On the verse from Ecclesiastes, see *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*; above, page 29); 2:246b (*Heikh*). On the pillar, see above, note 21.

70. **Third hall…** In which the *sefirah Netsaḥ* is revealed and active. This hall is called Purity. As with the first two halls, the name derives from Exodus 24:10: *They saw the God of Israel, and beneath His feet was like a fashioning of sapphire pavement and like the essence of heaven for purity*. See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*), 45a (*Heikh*). *Nogah*, "Brilliance, Radiance," appears numerous times in Ezekiel's vision of the chariot-throne (see Ezekiel 1:4, 13, 27; 10:4). Here it is the name of the hall's chief spirit. Though purer and more rarefied than the lower halls, the third hall is animated by the movement of the two halls below—which act as wick and oil to illuminate the hall. See *Zohar* 2:248a, 249a (both *Heikh*). See also [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 275 (133), 282, 288 (135–36) (mentioning the hall *Nogah*).

71. **a light consisting of three lights…** The light of the spirit itself and two lights that stream from it. The two lights ramify into twenty-two lights, corresponding to the twenty-two letters of the alphabet, which soar and then return to their source. See *Zohar* 2:249a (*Heikh*).

72. **All the lower lights…** Apparently meaning that the lights of the two lower halls are comprised in the two lights (which are twenty-two), which are in turn comprised in the main light of the third hall, itself comprised in the spirit *Nogah*. See *Zohar* 2:249a (*Heikh*).

73. **the image of a lion and the image of an eagle…** In the first hall, the living being has the image of a lion; in the second, the image of an eagle. Here they are combined. See *Zohar* 2:249a–b (*Heikh*).

74. **When the light sparkles, it generates…** The *ophanim* and angelic hosts emerge when the light *Nogah* illumines the living being. See *Zohar* 2:249b (*Heikh*).

On topaz, see Ezekiel 1:16: *The appearance of the wheels and their design were like topaz and all four had the same shape; their appearance and design were as of one wheel being inside the other wheel*. See also Ezekiel 10:9. Some translations render תרשיש (*tarshish*), "topaz," as "beryl." According to Rashi, *tarshish* refers to crystal.

75. **fashioned from their perspiration…** The four *ophanim* are a chariot for the living being. As in the previous halls, the *ophanim*, "wheels," move in spheres and supports. Their movement generates angelic hosts. See *Zohar* 2:249b (*Heikh*).

According to numerous rabbinic texts, the River of Fire (see Daniel 7:10) is formed from the sweat of the angelic beings carrying the Throne. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:1; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:8; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4; *Zohar* 2:211b; *ZḤ* 40a. Daniel 7:10 reads: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him*.

On four-faced angelic beings, see Ezekiel 1:6, 10; 10:14. On angels covering their faces, see Isaiah 6:2; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 8; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:3.

76. **When all those in the halls below…** The various lights, entities, and spirits in the preceding halls ascend, unite, and ultimately incorporate within the chief spirit of the third hall, *Nogah*. See *Zohar* 2:249b (*Heikh*). The bracketed phrase "in these wheels" apparently means that the living beings of the second hall unite with the wheels of the third hall. *See Or Yaqar, Matoq mi-Devash*.

77. **תא הרצים (*ta ha-ratsim*), *the chamber of the runners*…** As the third hall ascends, a certain section of the hall splinters off and does not ascend to the fourth hall. Instead, it remains in situ; and various forces of this site go forth to wage battle outside the hall against Israel's enemies, apparently indicating the celestial princes of the nations (see below, note 84). These forces are sent from the fourth hall, the hall of judgment. See *Zohar* 2:249b–250a (*Heikh*); 3:171b.

In the *Zohar*, "gold" is often associated with judgment. See for example, *Zohar* 2:23b–24a. The shields' number (600,000 myriads) corresponds to the totality of Israel, since it evokes the approximate number of Israelite men (600,000) who left Egypt with Moses and traveled through the wilderness. See Exodus 12:37; Numbers 11:21.

Mars is the fifth of the "seven planets" (counting the moon and sun), situated in the fifth sphere, and hence appropriate for the third (fifth from top) hall. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:1. See Solomon Ibn Gabirol, *Keter Malkhut*, Canto 18: "He [Mars] is a fierce warrior with a red shield, and he stirs up wars that bring death and destruction by fire and sword.… Destruction is his business, thunder, lightning, hailstones, and men transfixed by swords and spears that other men

have brought against them" (trans. Slavitt, *A Crown For the King*, 30). See also Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8.

The context in Kings and Chronicles reads: *In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt marched against Jerusalem and carried off the treasures of the House of YHVH and the treasures of the royal palace. He carried off everything; he even carried off all the golden shields that Solomon had made. King Rehoboam had bronze shields made instead, and he entrusted them to the officers of the guard who guarded the entrance to the royal palace. Whenever the king went into the House of YHVH, the guards would carry them and then bring them back to ta ha-ratsim, the armory of the guards* (1 Kings 14:25–28; 2 Chronicles 12:8–11).

78. **enter within the pillar…** See above, note 21.

79. **at first from below, subsequently from above…** The site requiring perfection is the seventh hall, which—once arrayed perfectly with the halls beneath—becomes the abode of *Shekhinah*. The process is inaugurated by human prayer below and culminates with the infusion of the divine flow from *Ein Sof* above throughout the *sefirot*, halls, and lower worlds. See *Zohar* 1:45a–b (*Heikh*). See also *Zohar* 2:256b, 262b (both *Heikh*).

80. **pillar of the world…** See Proverbs 10:25: יסוד עולם וצדיק (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*), *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, which is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Yoma* 38b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34. See *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*; below, page 50).

On prayer as not returning unfulfilled, see Isaiah 55:11; BT *Berakhot* 32b; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:12; *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*); 2:262a (*Heikh*). On abolishing decrees, see *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*; below, p. 50 and n. 108).

81. **cleave to one another like the colors of the eye…** The three halls cleave to one another like the colors

that can be seen in the eye: the white of the sclera, the color of the iris, and the black hole of the pupil. The various celestial entities populating the halls (lights, beings, wheels, spheres, etc.) correspond to the vision of sparkling lights attained by rolling the eyeball. The hidden light of the eye—the source of all the colors, not revealed even during the rolling—corresponds to the chief spirit of each hall. See *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Or Yaqar*. On the technique of rolling the eye to attain a vision of the hidden lights, see *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*; above, p. 30 and n. 61).

82. **colors of the eye that can be seen…** The sparkling colors that are seen when the eye is closed and rolls around are visible only by virtue of the colors normally registered by the eye. In turn, the concealed one, the hidden light of the eye, can be perceived only by virtue of the sparkling colors.

83. **Here pertains prostration…** On the prayer postures in *Heikhalot Bereshit*, see above, note 69. See also the additions to the seventh hall of holiness in *Heikhalot Pequdei*, likewise mentioning prostration (below, page 175). On prostration during prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 34a–b; *Megillah* 22b, *Shevu'ot* 16b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:13–14. According to these sources, prostration involves the spreading of hands and feet. See *Matoq mi-Devash*. See also the end of the fifth hall, where prostration and spreading of hands is mentioned (below, page 44).

84. **Fourth hall…** In which the *sefirah Gevurah*, "Judgment," is revealed and active. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:251a (*Heikh*). See *Zohar* 2:6a and *ZḤ* 36c (*RR*), which likewise mention the Hall of Merit. In *Heikhalot Pequdei* (2:265a), the Hall of Guilt on the Other Side corresponds to this hall. See also Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (81–82); *Zohar* 2:248b, 249b (both *Heikh*). Ordinarily one would expect the hall of *Tif'eret* to be placed here. In the *Heikhalot*, however, that hall is the sixth one,

following the halls of judgment and love. See *Or Yaqar*. Although it is the site of the celestial court, the hall is called זכות (*Zekhut*), "Merit," inclining toward one's acquittal and innocence.

The circle of seventy lights resembles the half-circle of seventy-one seated members of the Sanhedrin (seventy and the presiding officer). The additional two lights derived from the seventy allude to the Sanhedrin's two scribes. See M *Sanhedrin* 4:3; *Zohar* 1:229a, 241a; 2:6a, 51b; 3:99a (*Piq*), 236b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 61d (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (81); cf. Naḥmanides on Numbers 11:16. See BT *Sanhedrin* 37a, where the verse from the Song of Songs is applied to the Sanhedrin. Here the point is that the seventy-two lights are within, like the navel, and edged with roses, surrounded by the seventy princes.

The "seventy appointed princes" are the celestial princes of nations, on which see Daniel 10:13, 20–21; Septuagint, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; Jubilees 15:31–32; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 11:8, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 24; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 8; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis 9:19; *Zohar* 1:46b, 61a, 84b, 108b, 113a (*MhN*), 149b, 177a; 2:5b (*MhN*), 14b (*MhN*), 17a (*MhN*), 33a, 95b–96a, 126b, 151b, 185a, 186b–187a, 209a–b, 232b; 3:7b–8a, 260b–261a, 298a; *ZḤ* 24c, 28c (both *MhN*); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:204–5, n. 91.

85. **seven eyes of *YHVH* ranging over the whole earth...** Seven angelic eyes behold human deeds. The two lights (witnesses, scribes) testify to the seventy lights, which in turn promulgate judgment. See Zechariah 4:10: *These seven are the eyes of YHVH, ranging over the whole earth*. See also 2 Chronicles 16:9. See *Zohar* 1:241a; 2:129a, 251a–b (*Heikh*), 252a (*Heikh*); 3:99a (*Piq*), 293b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 66.

86. **Within this spirit...** Namely, Merit.

Apparently the three letters of the tetragrammaton signify *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. The three other lights,

corresponding to the three letters, correspond to the three courts that were in Jerusalem (see M *Sanhedrin* 11:2; BT *Sanhedrin* 86b). Hence, in total there are four courts in this hall—four halls that are one. The innermost hall is for the seventy lights of the Sanhedrin, and the other three halls for the three law courts. “Wholeness” connotes health. See *Zohar* 2:251a–b (*Heikh*). Cf. *Zohar* 1:159a.

87. **brings forth a holy living being—flaming, eyes like human eyes…** See *Zohar* 2:252a (*Heikh*).

See Daniel 7:8, where the fourth living being emerging from the sea is described as possessing *eyes like human eyes*. See also Ezekiel 1:18 and 10:12.

88. **four *seraphim*, all blazing brilliantly…** See *Zohar* 2:252b (*Heikh*). “Brilliantly” renders כחזור ושושן (*ke-ḥezur ve-shoshan*), an Aramaic translation of כפתור ופרח (*kaftor ve-feraḥ*), “calyx and blossom,” from Exodus 25:33 and 37:19, describing the lampstand of the Dwelling (see *Targum Onqelos*). In rabbinic literature, the phrase comes to mean “nicely said; excellent.” See *Bereshit Rabbah* 91:9. See also *Zohar* 3:131a (*IR*), 154a, 170b, 209a. The numerical value of פרח (*peraḥ*) is 288, corresponding to the four *seraphim* each with 72 spheres. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam* for different interpretations.

See Daniel 7:9, which describes the throne of the Ancient of Days: *Its wheels* (*galgalim*) *blazing fire*. See also the next verse: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him, a myriad of myriads attending Him*. On the formation of the river of fire, see above, note 75.

On singing angelic legions being burned, see *Zohar* 1:40a (*Heikh*; above, p. 17 and n. 32).

89. **judged in this flowing, gushing fire…** On the punishment of angels or heavenly princes of the nations in the river of fire, see *Ma’yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:60); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot), 530; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 296–97 (139);

Zohar 1:69a; 2:6b, 19b (*MhN*), 49a, 52b, 239b, 252b (*Heikh*); 3:27a, 30a. See also Daniel 7:11–12.

90. **except for three: children, life, and sustenance…** See BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 28a, in the name of Rava: "Life, children, and sustenance do not depend on merit but on מזלא (*mazzala*), destiny." Rabbi Shim'on reinterprets Rava's statement to mean that judgments pertaining to children, life, and sustenance do not devolve upon the Hall of Merit, but depend on the supernal river, namely the *sefirah Binah*. In the *Zohar, mazzala* is associated with the root נזל (*nzl*), "to flow," and often refers to the flow of emanation from *Binah*. See *Zohar* 1:115a, 137a, 156b, 159b, 160b, 181a, 207b; 2:6a, 252b (*Heikh*), 266a (*Heikh*); 3:25b, 77b, 134b (*IR*), 289a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*), 295b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 36c (*RR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 193; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (82); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 1:163, 2:22–23.

The spirit of the fourth hall ascends to the fifth hall by virtue of the spirit above, namely the spirit of the fifth hall.

91. **disseminates to the world…** The judgments rendered in the fourth hall cascade into the world through diverse celestial powers that seize and proclaim the word below. See *Zohar* 2:251b (*Heikh*).

According to Daniel 4, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon dreamed of a huge tree reaching to the sky, providing food for all creatures. A heavenly messenger then decrees that the tree be cut down.

The "serpent of heaven" alludes to תלי (*teli*), which in medieval Jewish astronomy refers to the constellation Draco ("Dragon"), extending more than halfway around the northern circumpolar sky. See Shabbetai Donnolo, *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, on *Sefer Yetsirah* 6:1: "When God created the sky above us, divided into seven heavens, He created the *teli*, dragon, out of fire and water in the form of a great serpent—like a great sinuous snake. He gave it a head and a tail and placed it in the fourth heaven, the middle one,

abode of the sun; and He stretched it from one end to the other like a bar, like a sinuous serpent… and all the stars, luminaries, and constellations are attached to it. As threads of warp and woof are attached to a weaver's beam, so all the stars in the seven heavens above and below are attached to it." See *Zohar* 1:125a; 2:35a; Gikatilla, *Sod ha-Naḥash u-Mishpato* (quoted in Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 79); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:607, 666–67; Kaplan, *Sefer Yetsirah*, 231–39. The sun is the fourth of the "seven planets" (counting the moon and sun), situated in the fourth sphere, and hence appropriate for the fourth (and fourth from the top) hall. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:1.

On Masters of Wings and birds of heaven, see Ecclesiastes 10:20: *For a bird of heaven will carry the voice; and a winged creature* [literally: *master of wings*] *will report the word*. The verse is understood as alluding to angels in *Devarim Rabbah* 6:10; *Zohar* 1:34b, 92a; 2:242a; 3:138a (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 203.

The heralds close the openings—to keep away those who are outside the hall—and thus enable the spirits to unite.

92. **Life depends on the realm beyond…** The judgment is rendered here although the source of life is beyond, in *Binah*. See above at note 90. See *Zohar* 2:252b–253a (*Heikh*).

On the prayer postures in *Heikhalot Bereshit*, see note 69. See also the additions at the end of the seventh hall of holiness in *Heikhalot Pequdei*, below, page 175, which likewise mention bowing. On bowing during prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 34a–b; *Megillah* 22b, *Shevu'ot* 16b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:13–14. See *Or Yaqar*; Elijah of Vilna, ad loc.

The phrase "entering and emerging" derives from the famous description of four rabbis who "entered the orchard," that is, who engaged in mystical contemplation of

the divine realm. Only Rabbi Akiva "entered in peace and emerged in peace." See JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4 (cf. *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:4; BT *Ḥagigah* 14b); *Zohar* 1:112a (*MhN*), 147b; 2:176a (*SdTs*), 179a (*SdTs*), 213b; 3:127b (*IR*), 141a (*IR*), 144a (*IR*), 290a (*IZ*), 292a (*IZ*), 297a; *ZḤ* 2c (*SO*), 6c (*SO*), 19a (*MhN*), 105a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 345; Liebes, "Ha-Mashiaḥ shel ha-Zohar," 153–56, and nn. 240–41; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 35, 97, 130–31, 178, nn. 110–11; Wolfson, "Forms of Visionary Ascent," 211–12; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows From Eden*, 63–67.

The full verse from Deuteronomy reads: *The Rock, His work is perfect for all His ways are justice. A faithful God, without corruption, just and upright is He*.

93. **Fifth hall…** In which the *sefirah Ḥesed*, "Love," is revealed and active. This hall encompasses all the lower halls. ברק (*Baraq*), "Lightning," appears in Ezekiel's vision of the chariot-throne (1:13). See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:253a (*Heikh*). Cf. *ZḤ* 39c.

White, black, red, and green correspond to *Ḥesed, Malkhut, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* respectively. The living being contains red and green, and hence an admixture of the four colors. In Ezekiel's vision each of the four living beings carrying the throne had four faces. See Ezekiel 1:10: *The image of their face was a human face* [at the front], *and on the right the four of them had a lion's face, and on the left the four of them had an ox's face, and the four of them had an eagle's face* [at the back].

On the all-inclusive nature of the human, see *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 20b; 2:73a (*RR*), 74a, 80b, 178a (*SdTs*), 211b; 3:48a–b. See also Liebes, *Peraqim*, 50–51, 53–54.

On the inclusive quality of purple, see *Zohar* 1:147b (*ST*); 2:135a; 3:141b (*IR*).

94. ***one wheel being inside the other wheel…*** In Ezekiel's vision, four identical double אופנים (*ofanim*), *wheels*, are located below and alongside each living being and move

in perfect unison with them. See Ezekiel 1:15–16: *I saw the living beings, and behold, one wheel on the ground next to each of the four-faced living beings. The appearance of the wheels and their design were like topaz and all four had the same shape; their appearance and design were as of one wheel being inside the other wheel*. Here, four supports extend from the living being of the hall. Together they are *one wheel*, which is really two, and to each one of the two is attached another wheel: hence four heads on one body. (Cf. *Zohar* 3:73b (*Mat*)). These four supports or wheels, which are "great beings" compared to the beings in the previous halls, are patterned on the "higher living beings," namely the four archangels found in the sixth hall. See *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*; below, page 45). The living being of the hall moves in two directions, namely for the promotion of love and of judgment.

The printed editions and manuscripts read "One is called 'wheel'"; however, following Elijah of Vilna and Tishby, I have emended the text in light of the verse from Ezekiel. Cf. *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*.

95. ***flame of the ever-turning sword…*** The full verse in Genesis reads: *He drove out the human and placed east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim and the flame of the ever-turning sword to guard the way to the Tree of Life*.

The clause "these are the changing lights, the flame of the sword" might also be rendered "these lights turn [or: become] the blade of the sword." See Onqelos on Genesis 3:24; Mopsik; Edri. Either way, modulating lights which are powers of judgment emerge from the flaming spirit, derived in turn from the chief spirit of the hall, the spirit of lightning. See BT *Yoma* 75a, where demons are said to "turn many colors." See next note. See *Zohar* 2:253a (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 65a.

On a sword hanging over the heads of the judges, see BT *Sanhedrin* 7a, in the name of Rabbi Yonatan: "A judge should always see himself as though a sword were hanging

over his head [literally: between his flanks] and Hell is open beneath him." See also BT *Yevamot* 109b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Sanhedrin* 23:8.

96. **sometimes female, sometimes male…** The lights of the left side of the hall, the flame of the sword, produce another living being stationed above four other angelic beings. Animated by the spirit of the living being above them, the four emit two sparks, which are forces of judgment. The fusion of the two living beings (from the right and left sides of the hall) generates yet another spark, which activates and controls the two sparks from the beings on the left. Under its influence, these two sparks modulate —first manifesting as males on missions of judgment, and then as females to seduce humankind. The two sparks extinguish because they hail from beings of unstable existence. See *Zohar* 2:253b (*Heikh*).

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 21:9: "*Ever-turning*—changing: sometimes male, sometimes female; sometimes spirits, sometimes angels." See *Zohar* 1:53b, 165a (*ST*), 232a, 237a; 2:27b (*Tos*), 264a (*Heikh*); 3:19b, 73b (*Mat*), 107b. On "holy watchers," meaning angels, see Daniel 4:10, 14.

97. **this hall transforms and is called 'The Hall of Love'…** Interestingly, the first details about the fifth hall, associated with *Hesed*, pertain to judgment. Only now, when the two spirits of the hall unite—the spirit of lightning and the flaming spirit (two breasts, two fawns, twins of a gazelle)—does the hall reveal its essential character: Love, marked by its change of name. See *Zohar* 2:253a (*Heikh*). See also *Zohar* 2:97a, 146b, 254b (*Heikh*), describing Rabbi Akiva's cleaving to this hall, 260b (*Heikh*); 3:267b.

98. **mandrakes… vines… pomegranates…** Signifying powers of love. See Song of Songs 7:13–14: *Let us go early to the vineyards to see if the vine has budded, if the blossoms have opened and the pomegranate is in flower. There I will give you my love. The mandrakes give forth*

fragrance, at our doors all delicacies; new as well as old, my love, I have stored away for you. See *Zohar* 2:253b (*Heikh*).

Venus is the third of the "seven planets" (counting the moon and the sun), situated in the third sphere, and hence appropriate for the fifth (third from top) hall. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:1. In Babylonian, Greek, and Roman mythology, Venus is the goddess of love.

Song of Songs 8:7 reads in full: *Many waters cannot quench love, nor rivers sweep it away. If a man offered all the wealth of his house for love, he would be utterly scorned*. See *Zohar* 3:54b–55a. According to *Or Yaqar*, the man in the verse is Samael, seeking in vain to nullify the flow of love.

On the prayer postures in *Heikhalot Bereshit*, see note 69. On prostration during prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 34a–b; *Megillah* 22b, *Shevu'ot* 16b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:13–14. According to these sources, prostration involves the spreading of hands and feet. See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. See also the end of the third hall, where prostration is mentioned (*Zohar* 1:43b). On the spreading of hands (or palms), see the additions at the end of the seventh hall of holiness in *Heikhalot Pequdei*, below, page 175.

99. **Sixth hall...** In which the *sefirah Tif'eret* is revealed and active. This is the hall of רצון (*ratson*), "desire, favor, will, goodwill." The spirits of the lower halls pursue (Aramaic, *rahatin*; Hebrew, *ratsim*) the spirit of *ratson*. This spirit is composed of six spirits (itself and the spirits of the lower halls). It "abides in six," that is, it is attached to the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*, with *Tif'eret* in the center. This hall contains the mystery of the kiss and lips, whereby the lower six halls unite with the *sefirot*. The twelve lights delight to ascend to the *sefirot* and receive the lower halls. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:253b–254a (*Heikh*). See *Or Yaqar*.

100. **he kissed kisses of love; this is the hall of Moses…** In the *Zohar*, Moses signifies *Tif'eret*. According to rabbinic tradition, certain virtuous heroes (including Moses, Aaron, and Miriam) died not by the power of the Angel of Death but rather by the kiss of God, *by the mouth of YHVH* (Numbers 33:38; Deuteronomy 34:5). See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 34:5; BT *Bava Batra* 17a (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *she-lo shalat*); *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 42; *Tanḥuma, Va'etḥannan* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'etḥannan* 6; *Zohar* 2:124b; 253b–254a (*Heikh*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:88b–89a; 3:129a (*IR*).

101. ***I descended to the nut garden…*** This statement is spoken by *Tif'eret*, who descends to the sixth hall. The union of male and female apparently refers to the union of *Tif'eret* with the spirit of the hall, which is portrayed here as female. See below: *Jacob kissed Rachel* (Genesis 29:11). See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash* for a different interpretation. See also [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 273 (133), 288 (136), 294 (138).

The "great living beings" are Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel—the four living beings who bear the divine throne. They join with the smaller living beings from the previous halls. Just as the kernel of the nut has four chambers joined in the center, so the four angels are joined on four sides. See *Zohar* 2:254a–b (*Heikh*). See also *Zohar* 3:154a. On the nut as an image for the four archangels, see *Zohar* 2:15b (*MhN*).

In the writings of Ḥasidei Ashkenaz, in particular El'azar of Worms, the nut symbolizes the *merkavah*, the divine chariot. "Descending to the nut garden" therefore connotes speculating on the divine throne. See Dan, *Torat ha-Sod*, 208–10; Farber, "Tefisat ha-Merkavah be-Torat ha-Sod"; Abrams, *Sexual Symbolism and Merkavah Speculation*. See *Zohar* 1:19b; 2:233b, 254b, 259b (last two *Heikh*); *ZḤ* 9d,

17c–18a (both *MhN*), 83a (*MhN, Rut*). See also Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 156–8; Liebes, *Peraqim*, s.v. אגוזא (*egoza*), 20–21, 27; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 239; Altmann, *Studies*, 172–79; Pope, *Song of Songs*, 574–79. The nut also appears as a cosmic symbol in the Orphic Mysteries. See Eisler, *Weltenmantel und Himmelszelt*, 2:521–25.

102. ***Oh that he would kiss me with the kisses of his mouth…*** Apparently the verse from the Song of Songs is spoken by the hall's spirit, depicted as female, inviting *Tif'eret* (Heaven) to unite with it. Cf. Tishby and *Matoq mi-Devash*, who understand the verse to be spoken by *Malkhut*. See also *Or Yaqar*. According to *Matoq mi-Devash*, the hall's spirit invites *Tif'eret* to descend below to unite with *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 2:254b (*Heikh*).

On the spiritual significance of a kiss and the verse from Song of Songs, see *Zohar* 1:70a; 2:124b, 146a–147a, 254a (*Heikh*), 256b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 60c (*MhN, ShS*), 63a, 64b (both *ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 396; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 372.

On the arrangement of the twelve angels in four groups of three, see *Zohar* 1:159a–b; 2:228a, 254b (*Heikh*). See also *Zohar* 1:149b (*ST*).

103. **the sixth spirit called Desire raises them…** Here begins a key moment in the process of unification. When the sixth hall contains all those below, it unites with *Tif'eret*, inaugurating the union of the sefirotic realm with the halls below. The six *sefirot* that are comprised in *Tif'eret* each take their appropriate hall. This union reaches its apogee in the seventh hall. See *Zohar* 2:256a–b (*Heikh*).

104. **They are joined as follows…** *Tif'eret* (Heaven, Jacob) takes the sixth hall; *Ḥesed* (Abraham) takes the fifth hall; *Gevurah* (Isaac) takes the fourth hall; *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* (prophets aside from Moses) take the third and second halls; *Yesod* (Joseph) takes the first hall. See *Zohar* 2:256b–258b (*Heikh*). Though not stated explicitly throughout, the halls appear to be cast as female in relation to the *sefirot*,

which are male. For example, the sixth hall is seen as Rachel vis-à-vis Jacob; and the fifth hall is seen as Sarah vis-à-vis Abraham. See *Zohar* 2:260b (*Heikh*).

On Jacob kissing Rachel, see *Zohar* 2:97a, 146b, 253b (*Heikh*); 3:250b; *ZḤ* 64b (*ShS*).

The verset from Genesis 12:11 is spoken by Abram to his wife, Sarai. Her beauty lies in her "breasts," namely the two spirits of the fifth hall. On breasts as constituting a woman's beauty, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:6; BT *Berakhot* 10b; *Zohar* 2:80b. See *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*; above, page 44), where the verse *Your two breasts are like two fawns* (Song of Songs 4:5) is interpreted as referring to the two spirits in the fifth hall. See also 2:256b–257a (*Heikh*).

On Song of Songs 7:2, see *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*; above, page 30); 2:247a (*Heikh*). In the *Zohar*, "thighs" signify the *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Hod*.

On the verse from Exodus: *And beneath his feet was like a fashioning of sapphire pavement, and like the essence of heaven for purity*, see *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*; above, page 26). The verse is presented "out of respect for the King" because *Yesod*, signifying the divine phallus, is not really *beneath His feet*. *Yesod* is, however, located "beneath the feet" insofar as it is beneath *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. At this stage in the process of unification, Joseph (the pillar, *Yesod*) takes his hall. Later, in the seventh hall, *Yesod* will unite with *Malkhut*.

105. **draw down the favor of the supreme spirit, the soul of all souls...** Namely, *Binah*. When the six lower halls are united with the six central *sefirot* comprising *Tif'eret*, the divine flow can descend into the seventh hall and down below.

In the sixth hall, the various prayer postures of the second-through-fifth halls reappear, to which is added "falling on the face." See above, note 69. See also the additions at the end of the seventh hall of holiness in *Heikhalot Pequdei*, below, page 175.

On “falling on the face” (*nefilat appayim*), often associated with the *Taḥanun* (Supplication) prayer recited after the *Amidah*, see JT *Ta’anit* 2:4, 65d; *Avodah Zarah* 4:1, 43d; BT *Megillah* 22a–b, *Ta’anit* 14b, *Bava Metsi’a* 59b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:13–14; *Zohar* 2:129a, 200b, 202b; 3:120b–121a, 176b, 241b; *ZḤ* 42a–b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:969–71; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 474–85; Fishbane, *The Kiss of God*, 104–20.

The quotation from Kings is spoken by the Israelites after a miracle is performed through Elijah at Mount Carmel: fire descends and consumes an ascent offering along with the wood, stones, and earth beneath it, as well as the water around it—demonstrating that *YHVH* is the true God and Baal is a false god. The verse reads in full: *When they saw this, all the people fell on the faces and cried out, “YHVH is God* [or: *YHVH alone is God*], *YHVH is God!”* Here, the claim is that “*YHVH* is *Elohim*” (Compassion and Judgment united) when the halls and the *sefirot* are united. See *Zohar* 2:256b (*Heikh*). According to rabbinic tradition, the name *YHVH* connotes compassion, while *Elohim* connotes judgment. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6.

On abolishing decrees of judgment, see *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*; below, p. 50 and n. 108). The verses from Isaiah and Psalms allude to *Tif’eret*. אתפאר (*Etpa’ar*), *I glory*, is a cognate of the Hebrew term תפארת (*Tif’eret*), which refers to the *sefirah* who is symbolized in the *Zohar* by *YHVH*.

106. **Seventh hall…** Corresponding to three upper *sefirot*—in particular *Binah*, also known as the Holy of Holies, the supreme soul. Yet as will become clear below, the seventh hall is also the abode of *Malkhut*. In contrast to the other halls, there are no living beings, *ophanim, galgalim*, etc., in this hall. Compared to *Binah*, known as the World that is Coming, this hall is like “this world” (our everyday temporal and spatial reality). *Binah* is the “totality of all” insofar as she contains the *sefirot* above and is the source of the *sefirot* below.

See *Zohar* 2:258b–259a (*Heikh*). On the seventh hall as the Holy of Holies and correlated with *Malkhut*, see Azriel of Gerona's commentary on the liturgy, MS Parma, Stern 46, fol. 79b.

The cherubim, purging cover, and curtain (and the Holy of Holies) all derive from the description of the Dwelling in Exodus (see 25:17–22 and 26:33–34), which—like the seventh hall here—possessed no image. The curtain marked off the holiest region of the sanctuary, beyond which lay the Ark of the Covenant, the purging cover, and the cherubim. The purging cover (*kapporet*, the precise meaning of which is unclear) was a solid slab of pure gold, placed over the ark. At each end of this gold cover, a cherub was hammered out. The two cherubim faced each other, with their heads bent slightly downward and their fully outstretched wings turned upward, sheltering the rest of the cover and the ark beneath. The divine voice was thought to issue from the space above the cover and between the two cherubim. The Hebrew (and Aramaic) words for "curtain" and "cover" are related: פרכת (*Parokhet*) and כפרת (*Kapporet*). On the meaning of *kapporet*, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:1014.

The precise signification of the two cherubim here is not clear. According to *Or Yaqar* they are Metatron and Sandalfon. Perhaps the two cherubim signify the coupling of male and female that takes place in this hall. See BT *Yoma* 54a, in the name of Rabbi Kattina: "When Israel ascended [to Jerusalem] for the Festival, the curtain would be rolled open for them and the cherubim revealed, their bodies intertwined. They [the people] would be addressed: 'Look! God's love for you resembles the love of male and female.'" See also BT *Bava Batra* 99a; *Zohar* 2:152b, 176a, 277b–278a; 3:59a–b, 67a.

On the drawn curtain, see *Zohar* 1:65a; 2:165b, 226a; 3:128a (*IR*); Valabregue-Perry, *Ba-Nistar u-va-Nigleh*, 191–201. On the purging cover, see *Zohar* 2:277a; *ZḤ* 80b (*MhN, Rut*). On Holy of Holies as *Binah*, see *Zohar* 1:206b;

2:4a, 239b. Cf. *Zohar* 1:229a–b. On the world that is coming, see note 47.

The manuscript witnesses and print editions are difficult here. I have followed Tishby and *Matoq mi-Devash*.

107. **the soul of all, arouses beyond, to the Concealed of all Concealed…** Once the spirits are joined together in the sixth hall, *Binah* arouses to *Ein Sof* (or perhaps both *Ein Sof* and *Keter*); and the seventh hall receives the flow from *Binah*, the Holy of Holies. As now becomes clear, the seventh hall is in fact the abode of *Malkhut* (in the classical *Heikhalot* corpus of late antiquity, the seventh hall is the abode of the Throne of Glory); it is also the site where the union of male and female occurs. This is the hall in which *Malkhut* receives the divine bounty. See *Zohar* 2:259a (*Heikh*).

On the phrase "that seventh might be joined with seventh," see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:613, n. 183: "*Yesod*, which is the seventh *sefirah* counting downward from *Binah*, is joined with *Malkhut*, which dwells in the seventh hall, and which is the seventh *sefirah* counting downward from *Ḥesed*. According to the commentary on the liturgy by Rabbi Azriel (MS Parma, Stern 46), who mentions by name a number of the halls described in the *Zohar*, the seventh hall is actually *Malkhut* itself. We read there (fol. 79b), 'This is the attribute *Malkhut*, named *shirah*, song, and it is the seventh hall and called the Holy of Holies.'" See *Zohar* 2:260b (*Heikh*), 261a (*Heikh*). See *Or Yaqar* and *Matoq mi-Devash* for different interpretations.

On the seventh hall as *Malkhut*, see *Zohar* 2:246a (*Heikh*), 259a (*Heikh*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:593–94, 749. On the Holy of Holies and *Binah* and *Malkhut*, see also *Zohar* 1:229a–b; 2:257b (*Heikh*), 258b (*Heikh*).

108. **the blessed Holy One decrees and he abolishes…** See 2 Samuel 23:3: *The God of Israel has said; to me the Rock of Israel has spoken: He who rules humanity,* צדיק מושל יראת אלהים (*tsaddiq moshel yir'at Elohim*), *just,*

who rules [*in*] *the awe of God*. According to a midrashic interpretation, the conclusion of the verse means: *The righteous one rules the awe of God*. See BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 16b, where Rabbi Abbahu conveys this sense of the verse and quotes God as saying: "I rule over humanity. Who rules over Me? The righteous one. For I issue a decree and he abolishes it." See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:1; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tavo* 1; *Devarim Rabbah* 10:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:20; *Zohar* 1:10a; 2:15a (*MhN*), 259a (*Heikh*), 262a (*Heikh*); 3:15a, 242a. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 63a, *Bava Metsi'a* 85a; *Rut Zuta* 2:19; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:6; *Zohar* 3:68a.

On the phrase "beloved above, beloved below," see BT *Qiddushin* 71a, describing one who knows the Name of Forty-two Letters; *Bahir* 80 (111), describing one who knows the Name of Twelve Letters. See also BT *Berakhot* 17a; *Zohar* 1:152b, 242b; 2:46a, 228a, 259a (*Heikh*).

The phrase "sustaining pillar" renders the single word קיומא (*qiyyuma*), whose wide semantic range in the *Zohar* includes both of these senses as well as "erecting, raising." See Liebes, *Peraqim*, 371–75.

See Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*), *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, but understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Yoma* 38b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34. See *Zohar* 1:43a (*Heikh*; above, page 37).

109. **Similarly, sacrifice...** Just as prayer unites the halls and *sefirot*—enabling the flow of *Binah* to pour forth into the Holy of Holies, the seventh hall—so did the sacrificial rite in the Temple in Jerusalem. The smoke nourishes the upper worlds, and the priests and Levites affect their unification—the priests signifying *Ḥesed*, and the Levites *Gevurah*. The "supreme soul" indicates *Binah* and the "supernal light" apparently signifies *Ḥokhmah*. See *Zohar* 2:259b (*Heikh*); Recanati on Leviticus 1:6.

Maimonides had relativized the importance of the sacrificial offerings, explaining them away as a concession to the primitive nature of ancient Israel. The *Zohar* counters by emphasizing their vital role in unifying the upper realms. See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:32; *Zohar* 1:35a, 64b–65a, 164a, 176b, 206b; 2:141a, 226a; 3:4b–5a, 294a (*IZ*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:878–90. On priests and Levites as *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* and their function in the Temple, see *Zohar* 1:64b; 3:32a, 39a, 176a.

"Limb" renders שייפא (*shaipha*)—a frequent Zoharic neologism that may be based playfully on the Talmudic line (BT *Sotah* 7b): על איבריה לשפא (*al eivreih la-shappa*), "His arm [or: limb] entered the casket." Or, the Zoharic sense of *shaipha* may derive from BT *Ḥullin* 42b: "This joint of the thighbone דשף (*de-shaph*), that slipped [i.e., was dislocated], from its place [i.e., out of its socket]." Note also the expression in Job 33:21: ושפו עצמותיו (*Ve-shuppu atsmotav*), *And his bones are rubbed away*. See *Arukh*, s.v. *shaph*; Rashi, *Sotah* 7b, s.v. *la-shappa*; idem on Job 33:21, citing *Ḥullin* 42b; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 227; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, s.v. *shappa, shphph*.

On limbs uniting with limbs, see also *Zohar* 2:256b, 259a (both *Heikh*).

110. **Here is the mystery of mysteries...** Here is the culmination of the entire process of the unification of the halls with each other and with the *sefirot*: the most recondite aspect of divinity, *Ein Sof* (Infinity), sweetens the lower worlds —infusing them with divine bounty. Even as *Ein Sof* spreads its light throughout the *sefirot*, it remains unfathomable. This subtle extension of *Ein Sof* from its own hiddenness is possible only by virtue of the unification of the halls below and their ascent. In the *Zohar*, "Will" usually denotes *Keter*, the first *sefirah*, but here the referent of "ungrasped Will" appears to be *Ein Sof*, or perhaps *Ein Sof* with *Keter*. See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam* for various interpretations. See *Zohar* 2:259b

(*Heikh*). See also *Zohar* 1:65a, 245a; 2:216b, 220b, 226a, 239a, 244b (*Heikh*). On the expression “unto Infinity,” see Valabregue-Perry, *Ba-Nistar u-va-Nigleh*, 161–166.

On the verse from Proverbs, see BT *Berakhot* 35b: “Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa said, ‘Whoever enjoys this world without reciting a blessing—it is as if he robs the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is said: *He who robs his father and mother and says, “It is no crime,” is partner to a destroyer* (Proverbs 28:24)—*father* is none other than the blessed Holy One… and *mother* is none other than Assembly of Israel.’”

In this Talmudic passage, Assembly of Israel apparently refers to a supernal hypostasis (the mother of Israel), as it does regularly in Kabbalah, designating *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 2:250a (*Heikh*). Elsewhere in the *Zohar* (as here), the couple mentioned in Proverbs 23—*Your father and your mother will rejoice*—alludes to *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 2:262a (*Heikh*); 3:55a, 119a, 156a, 240b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 217, 349 (and Wolfson’s notes). In M *Ta’anit* 3:8, this verse is applied to Ḥoni ha-Me’aggel, who brought rain in a time of drought (see below, note 112).

111. **Will of Thought grasps the ungrasped, unknown radiance…** When the halls and *sefirot* are arrayed and infused by the supreme soul (*Binah*), then *Keter* (“Will of Thought,” so named because *Keter*, which is also known as “Will,” illuminates *Ḥokhmah*, which is also known as “Thought”) grasps *Ein Sof*, though its perception of *Ein Sof* is dim. This dim illumination is sufficient to illuminate *Keter* and all worlds. See *Zohar* 2:259b (*Heikh*).

The notion that *Keter* cannot comprehend *Ein Sof* parallels the statement in the Gnostic *Gospel of Truth* (22:27–29), according to which the aeons (divine emanations) below *Nous* (Intellect) are unaware of the hidden divinity: “It was quite amazing that they were in the Father without knowing Him.” See *Zohar* 1:30a, 49a, 65a; 2:239a.

I have followed Cremona, Mantua, and Tishby here. Cf. *Or Yaqar* for a variant reading and interpretation.

112. **inherits all worlds… beloved above… awe prevails upon all creatures…** See BT *Qiddushin* 71a, describing one who knows the forty-two-letter divine name. On prayer that does not return unfulfilled, see *Zohar* 1:43a (*Heikh*; above, p. 37 and n. 80).

On "taking liberties" [Aramaic אתחטי (*itḥattei*); alternatively: "sinning; acting brashly; ingratiating oneself"] before God "like a son before his father," see Rabbi Shim'on son of Shetaḥ's critique of Ḥoni ha-Me'aggel for his brazenness before God in M *Ta'anit* 3:8 (BT *Ta'anit* 19a, *Berakhot* 19a). Much as Ḥoni succeeded in bringing needed rain, the kabbalists enable the descent of the divine flow through their prayer.

1. **We have already learned concerning those halls…** The version of the *Heikhalot* ("Halls, Palaces, Chambers") traditionally located in *Parashat Pequdei* knows of, draws upon, elaborates, and alters the account of the halls traditionally located in *Parashat Be-Reshit*. Though in many places the details of the halls differ and much new material is added here, the basic structure and plan is the same. The halls exist "beneath" the realm of the *sefirot*; they must be "arranged" so as to enable their union with the *sefirot*—linking all to *Ein Sof*, "Infinity." Just as *Ein Sof* abides beyond words, so the inner essence of the kabbalist's prayer lies beyond the mere words of prayer and involves mystical intention. See *Zohar* 2:213b, 259b (*Heikh*), 260b (*Heikh*). See also Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:591–94; Wolfson, *Luminal Darkness*, 119; idem, *Language, Eros Being*, 291. On the expression "unto Infinity" see Valabregue-Perry, *Ba-Nistar u-va-Nigleh*, 161–66.

"Abide-in-waiting," "is actualized," and "abides" all render verbs derived from the root *qym*, which has a range of meanings in the *Zohar*.

2. **so that low can be comprised in high** The task of prayer is to raise the halls above: first hall into second hall, second hall into third hall, etc.—extending unto the seventh hall. See *Zohar* 1:41a–b (*Heikh*).

3. **When Moses arranged his prayer…** When praying on behalf of Israel following the sin of the golden Calf, Moses lengthened his prayer, reaching high into the divine domain; when praying on behalf of his sister, who was struck with leprosy, he shortened. As "master of the house" he was able to command *Shekhinah* tersely. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On Moses' lengthy and short prayers, see BT *Berakhot* 34a: "Our Rabbis taught: Once a certain disciple went down before the Ark in the presence of Rabbi Eli'ezer, and he lengthened [the prayer] excessively. His disciples said to him, 'Master, how long-winded this fellow is!' He replied to

them, ‘Is he lengthening it more than our master Moses, of whom is written [*I threw myself before* YHVH] *the forty days and the forty nights*… (Deuteronomy 9:25)?’ Another time it happened that a certain disciple went down before the Ark in the presence of Rabbi Eli’ezer, and he shortened excessively. His disciples said to him, ‘How concise this fellow is!’ He replied to them, ‘Is he any more concise than our master Moses, as is written: *God, pray, heal her, pray* (Numbers 12:13)?’” See also *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 3; *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 9 (and additions); BT *Berakhot* 11a; *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*); 2:259b–260a (*Heikh*; below, page 152); 3:156a; see also 1:24b (*Tiq*).

In the *Zohar* the phrase “master of the house” is applied to both Jacob and Moses (1:21b, 138b, 152b, 236b, 239a; 2:22b, 235b, 238b; 3:163b), as well as to the mystic who masters the secrets of Torah (2:99b). See Numbers 12:7: *Not so My servant Moses, in all My house he is trusted*. Here, the title “master of the house” means “husband of *Shekhinah*.” According to rabbinic tradition, after encountering God on Mount Sinai, Moses abstained from sexual contact with his wife and maintained union with *Shekhinah*. See *Sifrei*, Numbers 99; BT *Shabbat* 87a; *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 13; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 7:6; *Zohar* 1:152b, 234b; 2:222a; 3:148a, 180a, 261b; *ZḤ* 59b (*MhN*). According to rabbinic exegesis, “house” implies “wife.” See M *Yoma* 1:1.

Moses’ title איש האלהים (*ish ha-Elohim*), *representative of God* (Deuteronomy 33:1; Psalms 90:1), is understood midrashically as “husband of God” (and thus entitled to command Him), and kabbalistically as “husband of *Shekhinah*” (and thus united with Her). See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim, Vezot Haberakhah*, 443–44, 448 (variants); *Tanḥuma, Vezot Haberakhah* 2 (*Ets Yosef*, ad loc.); *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 129; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:5; *Zohar* 1:6b, 21b–22a, 148a, 152a–b, 192b, 236b, 239a;

2:22b, 131b, 219b–220a, 235b, 238b; 3:261b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 25; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 101–2 (129).

4. **to ensconce *Shekhinah* in the world…** See *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*). As will become clearer below, when the halls are arrayed, the seventh hall becomes the abode of *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 2:259a (*Heikh*; below, note 292).

5. **seven firmaments above… seven firmaments below…** Corresponding to the halls of the upper and lower Gardens of Eden. See *Zohar* 1:38a (*Heikh*; above, p. 4 and n. 5). The human being's original domain was within the lower Garden of Eden, from which he had access to the celestial Garden above him. Following the expulsion, it was Abraham who repaired the breach. See *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*). Presumably the breach is restored through Abraham's prayer (see BT *Berakhot* 26b; on Abraham's appearance in the world, see *Zohar* 1:97b; 3:117a). See also Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:591–92. Cf. *TZ* 21, 43b.

On the canopies of the Garden of Eden, see BT *Bava Batra* 75a: "Rabbah said, 'The blessed Holy One will someday erect seven canopies for every single righteous person.'… Rabbi Ḥama son of Rabbi Ḥanina said, 'The blessed Holy One erected ten canopies for Adam in the Garden of Eden, as is said: *You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone* [*was your adornment: carnelian, chrysolite, and amethyst; beryl, lapis lazuli, and jasper; sapphire, turquoise, emerald, and gold*] (Ezekiel 28:13).'" See also *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 12; Rashi on Isaiah 4:5.

In the verse from Psalms, the word *temple* renders היכל (*heikhal*), also meaning "hall." This verse is cited frequently in the *Zohar*—with the *delightfulness of YHVH* signifying the flow of *Binah*, and *temple* signifying *Shekhinah*. Here, the correlates are the upper and lower Gardens of Eden. See *Zohar* 1:197b, 218a, 219a; 2:11a, 57b, 127a; *ZḤ* 85b (*MhN, Rut*); Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows From Eden*, 283–289.

On Deuteronomy 32:32, see *Zohar* 1:192a; 2:144a. According to a midrashic tradition in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Ila'i, the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:17) was grapes. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 15:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 12:1; *Ester Rabbah* 5:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 20:6, all of which quote the verse from Deuteronomy. On the poison of asps, see also Job 20:16.

On Adam's being lured by the serpent's wicked counsel, see *Zohar* 2:262b (*Heikh*; below, page 178), where Rabbi Shim'on begins his account of the halls of impurity by addressing Adam. On impure desires, cf. 2:134b.

6. **Those below are halls for the upper firmaments...** The halls of the lower Garden of Eden receive the halls of the celestial Garden of Eden. Indeed, this structure is repeated even higher in the divine realm, since the halls of the celestial Garden receive the *sefirot*.

As this paragraph makes clear, *Heikhalot Pequdei* knows of and draws upon *Heikhalot Bereshit*. From Rabbi Shim'on's statement it seems that the author wished to clarify certain matters as found in the earlier version.

7. **First hall...** In this hall, the *sefirot Yesod* and *Malkhut* are revealed and active. See *Zohar* 1:41b, 45a (both *Heikh*); 2:258a, 260a, 260b (all *Heikh*).

In its simple sense, the phrase from Hosea reads: *When YHVH first spoke through Hosea*, though Rabbi Shim'on is drawing attention to the word תחלת (*teḥillat*), *first*, which also means "beginning." His point is that all prophecy—indeed all knowledge of the divine realm—begins here. Through this hall, prophets attained their visions of *Shekhinah*.

"Speculum" renders אספקלריא (*ispaqlarya*), which means "glass, mirror, lens," deriving from the Greek *speklon* and Latin *speculum*. See BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine], while Moses our teacher gazed through translucent glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that shines]." In the

Zohar, *Shekhinah* is a speculum that does not shine on its own but rather reflects and transmits the other *sefirot*. Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:12: “For now we see though a glass darkly, but then face-to-face.” See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:14; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 33–34; Naḥmanides on Exodus 6:2; *Zohar* 1:33b, 120a, 183a; 2:23b, 82b, 129b, 221a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 69 (87); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:44–45, n. 242; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, index, s.v. “speculum”; Huss, “Ḥakham Adif mi-Navi,” 109–14; idem, *Ke-Zohar ha-Raqi’a*, 17–21.

8. **required [to take the woman of whoredom]...** Hosea 1:2 reads: *When* *YHVH* *first spoke through Hosea,* *YHVH* *said to Hosea, “Go, take yourself a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by straying from* *YHVH*.”

As noted, Hosea attained his prophecy from within the first hall. As the lowest of the halls of purity and holiness, the first hall lies adjacent to, or just above, the halls of impurity. To begin his career as a prophet of Israel and a prophet of the side of holiness, Hosea first needed to encounter the other side, in order to understand Israel’s sin and existential situation. Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 87a–b.

The “Woman of Whoredom,” the demonic feminine, is the shadow side of the divine feminine, *Shekhinah*, the Woman of Valor (see Proverbs 12:4, 31:10). See *Zohar* 1:38b (*Heikh*); 2:148b.

The halls of impurity parallel the halls of holiness. See *Zohar* 2:262b–268b (*Heikh*).

9. **Hosea was terrified...** Fearing that he would be defiled by the halls of impurity and fall victim to the Other Side as did Noah, Hosea needed to be commanded to encounter those halls. Hosea did not enter the halls of impurity; he merely perceived them from within the first hall of holiness.

On Gomer daughter of Diblaim, see BT *Pesaḥim* 87a: “Gomer—Rav said, ‘For all גומרים (*gomerim*), climax, in her.’”

See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 150. See *Or Yaqar*, who—following the Talmud—connects Diblaim with דבלה (*develah*), "fig," which he takes to point to Adam's sin.

On Genesis 9:21 and Noah's seduction by the Other Side, see *Zohar* 1:73a–b, 76a, 83a, 140b, 192a; 2:267b (*Heikh*; below, page 206), where the verse is applied to the seventh hall of impurity; *ZḤ* 22c (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 36–37 (43–44); idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 150.

On "alien god" as referring to the evil impulse and the demonic realm, see JT *Nedarim* 9:1, 41b; BT *Shabbat* 105b; *Zohar* 2:182a, 243a; 3:106a–b. *Alien god* derives from Deuteronomy 32:12; Malachi 2:11; Psalms 81:10.

10. **beginning of all, to ascend...** Both prayers and souls (post-mortem) begin their ascent in this hall. On this hall as an abode poised in radiance, cf. the depiction of the first abode in *Zohar* 1:40a (*Heikh*).

Exodus 24:10 reads in full: *They saw the God of Israel, and beneath His feet was like a fashioning of sapphire pavement and like the essence of heaven for purity*. This verse describes a vision experienced by Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel. The second part of the verse is now expounded as referring to the first three halls: *sapphire pavement*—the first hall; *essence of heaven*—second hall; *purity*—third hall. See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*).

11. ***Tohari'el...*** On the angel *Tohari'el*, whose name derives from the root טהר (*thr*), "pure," see *Sidrei de-Shimmusha Rabba* (ed. Scholem), 123; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 268 (131); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 403; *Zohar* 1:40a (*Heikh*), 108a (*ST*); 2:263a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). Cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §427. On "masters of eyes," see *Zohar* 2:4a (*Mat*), 50b (*Mat*), 202a, 251b (*Heikh*).

12. **another prince stationed in the other side lies in waiting...** See *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*), describing the first hall of impurity: "In this hall presides a prince named

Dumah, presiding above and below. This is who seizes the soul when it is thrust out of the holy hall by that prince *Tohari'el*, and this is who stands by that portal of the Holy Side."

"Wardens of judgment" renders גרדיני נימוסין (*gardinei nimusin*). *Gardinei* derives from the Castilian *guardián* (guardian). See Corominas, *Diccionario*, 3:246–48.

On the sentence of Hell as lasting twelve months, see M *Eduyyot* 2:10; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17a; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 3; *Zohar* 1:68b, 106b (*MhN*), 130b; *ZḤ* 25b (*MhN*). See also *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*; below, page 180).

13. **prayers that pierce atmospheres...** *Tohari'el* is gatekeeper of souls and also prayers that seek to ascend through the first hall. Although sincere prayers offered individually are equally legitimate, it is congregational prayer that ascends most easily—without meticulous inspection.

On the preference for communal prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 7b–8a, *Ta'anit* 8a; *Zohar* 1:160b, 167b, 234a; 3:271a (*Piq*).

From here until the discussion of "Gates of Tears" below is very closely paralleled in Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 1:139–142.

On prayers becoming a crown upon the head of Righteous One, see *Shemot Rabbah* 21:4, in the name of Rabbi Me'ir and Rabbi Abba: "When Israel prays, you do not find them all praying as one, but rather each assembly prays on its own, one after the other. When they have all finished, the angel appointed over prayers gathers all the prayers offered in all the synagogues and fashions them into crowns, which he places on the head of the blessed Holy One."

In BT *Ḥagigah* 13b, it is reported that the angel Sandalfon "is higher than his fellows by a distance of five hundred years; and he stands behind the Chariot binding crowns for his Lord." See *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *ve-qosher*;

Pesiqta Rabbati 20; *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 495; *Zohar* 1:37b, 132a, 167b; 2:58a, 146b, 202b, 209a; Recanati on Genesis 19:27, 26a; Green, *Keter*, 37–38.

The title Righteous One designates *Yesod*, based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). The verse literally means *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, but it is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34.

On prayer's ascent through atmospheres and seven heavens guarded by various princes, see *Zohar* 2:201a–202b.

14. **blemished prayers…** The rejected prayer is not lost for all time and can be redeemed. Cf. *Zohar* 2:252a–b (*Heikh*). *Sahadi'el*, whose name derives from the root סהד (*shd*), "testimony, witness," does not appear elsewhere in the *Zohar*.

15. **the prince in the impure Other Side takes it…** See *Zohar* 2:263b (*Heikh*; below, page 182), on the spirit *Gamgima* in the first hall of impurity.

16. **this prince…** *Tohari'el*. As is stated explicitly here, the halls of *Pequdei* are for the ascent both of souls post-mortem and of prayers. In *Heikhalot Bereshit* these two aspects of ascent appear separately—the ascent of souls described in the opening section of the unit (*Zohar* 1:38a–41a), and the ascent of prayer in the main portion of the composition (1:41a–45b).

17. **Gates of Tears** See BT *Berakhot* 32b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Since the day the Temple was destroyed, the gates of prayer have been locked…. Yet even though the gates of prayer have been locked, the gates of tears have not.'" See *Zohar* 1:132b; 2:12b, 165a; *ZḤ* 80a (*MhN, Rut*).

On the opening dug by the blessed Holy One for penitents, see BT *Sanhedrin* 103a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*

24:11; *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*; above, p. 10 and n. 18).

18. ***Raḥami'el…*** On this angel, whose name derives from the root רחם (*rḥm*), "compassion, womb," see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 38 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§359, 716, 771; *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*), 108a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*).

On *ophanim*, see below, n. 25.

19. **other tears, eternally inscribed…** Not only the tears of prayer are preserved on high, but also the tears of the angels and tears shed over the righteous.

Erelim renders אראלם (*er'ellam*), a word whose form and meaning are dubious. In the verse in Isaiah, it has sometimes been translated "their valiant ones, their brave men," referring to the Judeans withstanding Sennacherib's onslaught. See Isaiah 29:1–2; *ABD*, s.v. "Ariel." In rabbinic tradition, the word אראלם (*er'ellam*) is transformed into אראלים (*er'ellim*), meaning "angels" or a group of angels, while in medieval angelology they constitute one of ten such classes.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 56:5; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:23; BT *Ḥagigah* 5b, *Ketubbot* 104a; *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 33:22; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:7; *Zohar* 1:182a, 210a; 2:2b, 18a (*MhN*), 43b, 196a, 250b; *ZḤ* 6a (*MhN*); *Orḥot Tsaddiqim*, 26; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:23, n. 64; 5:417, n. 117.

See BT *Shabbat* 105b, in the name of Bar Kappara: "Whoever shed tears for a worthy person, the blessed Holy One counts them and deposits them in His treasury, as is said: *My flagrant fate You Yourself have counted out—put my tears in Your flask. Are they not in Your counting?* (Psalms 56:9)."

See also BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 18b, where Rabbi Shim'on teaches that "the death of the righteous is equal to burning of the House of our God."

20. **spirit called סטוטריה (*Situtriyah*)… appearance of sapphire…** Equivalent to the spirit *Sappira* in *Heikhalot Bereshit*. See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*; above, p. 26 and n. 52).

On *Situtriyah*, whose meaning (and pronunciation) is obscure, see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*). See Cordovero's note on this name in *Or Yaqar*.

21. **pours forth souls to enter within the seventh hall…** As becomes clearer below, the seventh hall, though correlated with *Binah*, is in fact the abode of *Shekhinah*. The river of *Yesod* streams souls into *Shekhinah*, which then pass into the first hall. In contrast to the predominant view in the *Zohar* that souls are bisexual (comprising male and female) in the divine realm (see 1:85b), here souls are already marked by sexual differentiation. *Situtriyah*, on the right, receives male souls.

On the descent of souls through the halls, see *Zohar* 2:253a, 259a (both *Heikh*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:592, 749–50. On the seventh hall as *Malkhut*, see *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:259a (*Heikh*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:593–94, 749. On *Yesod* as a river conveying the soul, see *Zohar* 1:197a, 198a, 205b, 209a; 2:70a.

The image of the "flowing and gushing" river derives from Daniel 7:10; and the source of the river Eden (signifying *Ḥokhmah*), from Genesis 2:10.

22. **another spirit emerges to the left…** Equivalent to the spirit *Livnat* in *Heikhalot Bereshit*. See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*; above, p. 27 and n. 53). The names and pronunciation of the spirit are obscure. The two spirits of the first hall, to the right and left, correlate with male and female, *Yesod* and *Malkhut*.

23. **Desire above yields males; desire below yields females…** When the union between *Yesod* (the river) and *Malkhut* (the seventh hall) originates with *Malkhut*, then female souls are produced. Conversely, when the union originates with *Yesod*, male souls are formed. Female souls are entrusted to the spirit on the left in the first hall, while male souls are entrusted to the spirit on the right.

On the formation of male and female souls, see *Zohar* 1:85b, 182a, 208a, 209a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*,

3:1355–56.

Cf. BT *Niddah* 31a, in the name of Rabbi Ammi: “If a woman emits semen [i.e., climaxes] first she gives birth to a male; if the man emits semen first she gives birth to a female.”

On the spirit Sapphire Pavement, see *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*). Here, the intended sense seems to be “Pavement of Sapphire”—since its correlate is the spirit of the left, which is equivalent to *Livnat*, “Pavement”—rather than the combined spirit Sapphire Pavement.

24. **spirit of the left fuses with the spirit of the right…** The union of the two spirits in the first hall produces combined male and female souls. The combined souls then separate, only to be reunited later on when husband and wife (re)unite. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1356.

See *Zohar* 1:85b: “When souls issue, they issue male and female as one. Subsequently, as they descend they separate—one to this side, one to that side; and later the blessed Holy One couples them. Coupling is entrusted to the blessed Holy One alone, for He knows their mates, to join them fittingly. Happy is the human who acts virtuously, walking the way of truth—for soul is joined to soul, as they were originally!” See also *Zohar* 1:91b, 208a; 3:43b, 283b.

Cf. the rabbinic tradition on the original nature of Adam (*Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1): “Rabbi Yirmeyah son of El’azar said, ‘When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous, as is said, *Male and female He created them* (Genesis 1:27).’ Rabbi Shemu’el son of Naḥman said, ‘When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him with two faces. Then He sawed him and gave him two backs, one on this side and one on that.’” See Plato, *Symposium* 189d–191d; BT *Berakhot* 61a; *Eruvin* 18a; Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 217.

On the fusion of the two spirits in the first hall, cf. *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*).

25. **From them *ophanim*, wheels, come into being…** The halls are filled with diverse celestial forces—including living beings, *ophanim, galgalim*, and *seraphim*—drawn from Ezekiel's vision of the chariot (chaps. 1 and 10) and Isaiah's vision of God in the celestial Temple (chap. 6). Here, the *ophanim* are created by the fusion of the two spirits of the hall. See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*).

Ezekiel 1:16 reads: *The appearance of the wheels and their design were like topaz, and all four had the same shape; their appearance and design were as of one wheel's being inside the other wheel*.

Elijah of Vilna emends the text to read "they are arranged in a row," rather than "they abide in song."

26. **living being ruling over them, called בזק (*Bazaq*), Spark…** Again, the union of the two spirits of the first hall generates a living being, who presides over the *ophanim*. See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*). Here the living being is named *Bazaq*, the name presumably derived from Ezekiel 1:14: *The living beings darting to and fro with the appearance of sparks* [or: *like a flash of lightning*]. See also Ezekiel 1:20: *for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels*.

This and the next two paragraphs are closely paralleled in Gikatilla, *Sod ha-Ḥashmal*, s.v. *ke-mar'eh ha-bazaq*, in *Arzei Levanon*, 42.

27. **One expanse extends from it…** From the Spark. According to *Matoq mi-Devash* and *Sullam*, the "two cherubs" are Metatron and Sandalfon. The "supreme comprised spirit" is the combined spirit *Situtriyah* and *Adiryah*—the spirit of the right and the spirit of the left, also known as Sapphire and Pavement, respectively. Ezekiel 10:1 continues: *there was something like a sapphire stone; an appearance resembling a throne could be seen over them*. The "expanse" over which the Spark is empowered is not the one mentioned in Ezekiel 1:22: *There was an image above the heads of the living being; an expanse like*

awesome ice, spread out above their heads. (In the *Zohar*, the latter "expanse" designates *Binah* or *Yesod*.)

28. **Sandalfon… weaving them as wreaths…** See the sources cited in note 13. On Sandalfon, see also Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 148–54.

29. **When the north wind arouses and night is split…** According to the *Zohar*, at midnight God delights in the souls of the righteous; and all kabbalists are expected to rise and adorn *Shekhinah* with words of Torah and song in preparation for Her union with *Tif'eret*. See Psalms 119:62 and BT *Berakhot* 3b: "Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid said, 'There was a harp suspended above [King] David's bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn.'"

See *Zohar* 1:10b, 40b (*Heikh*), 60b, 72a, 77a–b, 82b, 92a–b, 132b, 136b, 178b, 231b; 2:18b (*MhN*), 46a, 130a–b, 136a, 173b, 195b–196a; 3:21b–22b, 52b, 193a; *ZḤ* 13c (*MhN*); Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 146–50; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 121–145.

30. **the expanse in which are suspended stars, constellations…** See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, in the name of Resh Lakish: "There are seven heavens [or: expanses]…. In the one called רקיע (*raqi'a*), 'expanse,' sun, moon, stars, and constellations are set." Here "the expanse" symbolizes *Yesod*, through which the divine male and female—symbolized by sun and moon—unite. See *Zohar* 1:8b, 34a; 2:2a. See also Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 199; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 61b.

The "Book of Remembrance" signifies the union of *Malkhut* (book) and *Yesod* (remembrance). The Hebrew word rendered as "remembrance" is זכרון (*zikkaron*), ostensibly containing within it the word זכר (*zakhar*), "male." See *Zohar* 2:70a, 200a. On the Book of Remembrance (or Memory), see also *Zohar* 1:8a, 8b, 62b; 2:217a.

The full verse in Malachi reads: *Then those who revere YHVH spoke with one another; and YHVH listened attentively, and a book of remembrance was written in His presence concerning those who revere YHVH and contemplate His name*. Instead of ויכתב ספר זכרון (*va-yikkatev sefer zikkaron*), *and a book of remembrance was written*, most *Zohar* manuscripts (as well as Mantua and Cremona) read ויכתב בספר הזכרון (*va-yikkatev be-sefer ha-zikkaron*), *and it was written in the book of remembrance*. See *Zohar* 1:200b, 243a; 2:217a; 3:59b; *ZḤ* 23b (*MhN*); *Avot* 3:2, 6; Minḥat Shai on the verse.

31. **The four wheels move on twelve supports…** Namely, the *ophanim* (though the *Zohar* here calls them *galgalin*) beneath the Spark. On the twelve supports, see *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*). See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam*.

The names of the wheels vary in the manuscripts and printed editions. I have followed Cremona.

On *Ahani'el*, whose name is obscure—though apparently related to the verb מהנה (*mehaneh*), "delight, pleasure"—see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §363; *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*), 108a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). On *Qadumi'el*, whose name derives from the root קדם (*qdm*), "before, early, east," see *Zohar* 1:40a (*Heikh*), 108a (*ST*); 3:2b; *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). On *Malki'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 40 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:42); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§494, 505, 581, 598, 720, 773; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:248a (*Heikh*), 256a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*); *TZ* 70, 129b; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 135–36. The name *Yahadonyah* does not appear elsewhere in the *Zohar*.

On the keys of the holy name, see *Zohar* 2:133b.

32. **The air absorbs them and these interlace with those…** Under the guidance of the Spark and through the four *ophanim*, the letters of the divine name אדני (*Adonai*) fuse with the letters of the divine name יהוה (*YHVH*). The significance of this interlacing is explained below. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam* for various

interpretations. On soaring and interlacing letters, cf. *Zohar* 1:159a; 2:201b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 282–83 (135). On Sandalfon, see also *Zohar* 2:260a (*Heikh*; below, page 155), which likewise treats the fusion of letters; *ZḤ* 38d; and above, note 28.

33. **by the mystery of the comprised spirit…** The interlacing of the two divine names corresponds to the fusion of the two spirits in the hall—*Situtriyah* and *Adiryah*, male and female, *YHVH* and *Adonai*. Cf. *Or Yaqar* and *Sullam* for slightly different readings.

The verse from Exodus refers to the Dwelling in the desert. See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*). Here the parallel *loops* are the letters of the two divine names.

34. **In this hall is יאהדונהי (*YAHDVNHY*)…** The name formed by the fusion of the two spirits and the two divine names יהוה (*YHVH*) and אדני (*Adonai*). The combined name and the combined spirit animate everything in the first hall. On this name, see *Zohar* 2:260a (*Heikh*; below, page 155), 260b (*Heikh*; below, page 158). See also Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67; *Zohar* 1:100b (*ST*); 2:235b; Gikatilla, *Sod ha-Ḥashmal*, s.v. *ke-mar'eh ha-bazaq*, in *Arzei Levanon*, 42. In *Ra'aya Meheimna* and *Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*, which are later strata of the Zoharic corpus, this name appears widely.

On the motif of sunlight in water, see *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 39d; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 89–90 (113): "If you take a bowl of water and place it in the sunlight and ripple it, you will find on the wall a radiance like shining mirrors flashing back and forth. The light moves so fast, no one can detain it." (Transl. Matt, *Essential Kabbalah*, 202). See also idem, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 380a, published by Gershom Scholem, "Eine unbekannte mystische Schrift des Moses de León," 118–119, n. 5, translated in Matt, *Essential Kabbalah*, 114); idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67; Idel, *New Perspectives*,

140; idem, “Le-gilguleiah shel tekhniqah qedumah”; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 381.

According to *Or Yaqar*, sunlight in water signifies the name *YHVH* in the name *Adonai*.

35. **When this spirit illumines through this name…** Namely, through the name יאהדונהי (*YAHDVNHY*). On the verse from Ezekiel, see *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*); cf. *Zohar* 2:242a. See also Ezekiel 1:20.

36. **In the middle of this hall stands a pillar…** See *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*). On the pillar, see *Zohar* 1:39a–b (*Heikh*), 42a–43a (*Heikh*), 81a (*ST*), 219a; 2:130b, 184b, 210a, 211a; 3:185b; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 64a–b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 271–72, 278, 284 (132–35), 298–99 (139–40); Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 101–42. Cf. *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:28). On the verse from Ecclesiastes, see *Zohar* 1:42a, 42b (both *Heikh*). The *Zohar* misquotes the verse slightly here.

37. **so that the holy name will be complete…** The holy name is complete (i.e., *YHVH Elohim*) when the halls are arrayed and united with their respective *sefirot*. See *Zohar* 2:256b (*Heikh*; below, page 130).

On *Adrahani’el*, cf. *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 401. On the mysteries of the keys of the holy name, see *Zohar* 2:133b.

38. **Second hall…** In this hall, the *sefirah Hod* is revealed and active. See *Zohar* 1:42a, 45a (both *Heikh*); 2:257b–258a, 260b, 261b–262a (all *Heikh*).

39. **אורפניאל (*Orpeni’el*)…** The chief spirit of the hall. His name means “light of the face of God.” See *Ma’aseh Merkavah*, 7 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:62); *Zohar* 2:247a, 260b (both *Heikh*); *TZ* 70, 127a; *ZḤ* 111c (*Tiq*); Margaliot, *Mal’akhei Elyon*, 10–11.

On the verse from Exodus, see *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*); 2:66b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 282 (135).

The three directions south, north, and east correspond respectively to the locations right, left, and center—and also to the divine attributes of love, judgment, and compassion. *Orpeni'el* presides over the center (eastern) opening, which is correlated with "heaven."

40. **His purple robe** פורפירוי (*Purpiroi*). See Psalms 110:6: *He will execute judgment upon the nations—filled with bodies—smashing heads over the wide earth*. In the biblical context, the phrase *filled with bodies* refers to the heaps of corpses among the nations, though in late rabbinic texts it refers to a garment of vengeance donned by God that is inscribed with the martyrs of Israel. See *Midrash Tehillim* 9:13; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Numbers 247, Psalms 643, 869; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 284–85 (135–36); *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*), 41a (*Heikh*), 61b, 191a, 224b; 2:8b; 3:140b (*IR*); *ZḤ* 70d (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:787; Liebes, "Porphoriyatah shel Helena."

41. **on account of another cup...** See BT *Sanhedrin* 43a, in the name of Rav Ḥisda: "One who is being led out to execution is given a grain of frankincense in a cup of wine to benumb his senses, as is said: *Give strong drink to the hapless and wine to the embittered* (Proverbs 31:6)." See also *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 2; *Zohar* 2:264a (*Heikh*; below, page 184). See also Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 1:170.

See BT *Bava Batra* 75a: "Rabbah said in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan, '... The blessed Holy One will fashion a canopy for each and every [righteous] person befitting his honor.'... Rabbi Ḥanina said, '... Each one will be scorched by the canopy of his fellow. Alas for such shame! Alas for such humiliation!'" See *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*), 130a, 231b; 3:196b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 280 (134); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 374; idem, *Shushan Edut*, 348.

On the gate of the east "whence light issues," see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3; *Zohar* 1:34b. See also 2:248b (*Heikh*).

42. **There is wine and then there is wine…** The side of holiness is paralleled on the side of impurity. On the prince on the Other Side and the "Cup of Staggering," see *Zohar* 2:264a (*Heikh*; below, page 184). See Radak on Isaiah 51:17. See also *Zohar* 2:267b (*Heikh*; below, page 206).

Isaiah 51:17 reads: *Rouse, rouse yourself! Arise, O Jerusalem, you who from YHVH's hand have drunk the cup of His wrath, you who have drained to the dregs the bowl, the cup of staggering*. See also ibid., 51:22.

See BT *Berakhot* 57a: "A *tanna* recited in the presence of Rabbi Yoḥanan: 'All drinks are a good omen in a dream except wine: for some, drinking it is beneficial; for others, it is harmful. For some, drinking it is beneficial, as is said: *wine that gladdens the human heart*. For others, it is harmful, as is said: *Give strong drink to the hapless, and wine to the embittered* (Proverbs 31:6).'"

See also Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 36–37 (43–44); *Zohar* 1:238b; 3:12b, 39a.

Psalms 75:9 reads: *There is a cup in YHVH's hand with foaming wine fully mixed; from this He pours; all the wicked of the earth drink, draining it to the very dregs*. See *Zohar* 2:267b (*Heikh*).

43. **so too on the side of impurity…** See *Zohar* 2:262b–268b (*Heikh*). See Ecclesiastes 7:14: *God made one corresponding to the other*.

44. **radiance that does not change…** See *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*), where the spirit is described as "always abiding in whiteness, its colors not mingling with another—essence that never changes." See also *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*). The spirit of the hall is animated by the light from the third hall and the ascending light of the first hall.

The description of the rolling eye emitting radiant light alludes to a technique for seeing the concealed colors of the *sefirot*. By closing one's eye and pressing a finger on the eyeball until it is moved to one side, one gains a vision of

colors. See *Zohar* 2:23b: “The secret is: close your eye and roll your eyeball. Those colors that shine and sparkle will be revealed.” Though not stated explicitly in our passage, it seems likely that this technique underwrites the experience presented in this unit. Here the point is that just as the hidden colors are seen only when the eye is stimulated, so the spirit of the second hall shines only when stimulated by the spirit of the first hall below. See *Or Yaqar*.

On this mystical technique, see *Zohar* 1:18b, 42a (*Heikh*), 43a–b (*Heikh*), 97a–b (*ST*); 2:43b (*Piq*), 69a; *ZḤ* 63b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 96–97 (123–24); idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67; Scholem, “Colours and Their Symbolism,” 66–67; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 291–93; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 380–83.

45. ***The curves of your thighs…*** In the *Zohar*, thighs signify the *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. The plural—*curves of your thighs*—alludes to the two spirits of the second hall, *Orpeni’el* and *Hadrani’el*. They are located on the right and left, respectively, and indicated by “essence” (unchanging) and by “heaven” (fire and water). Together they are called *the essence of heaven*, which is derived from Exodus 24:10: *And beneath His feet was like a fashioning of sapphire pavement, and like the essence of heaven for purity*. See *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*), 45a (*Heikh*); 2:258a (*Heikh*; below, page 140).

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 4:7, in the name of Rav: “The blessed Holy One took אש (*esh*), fire, and מים (*mayim*), water, mixed them with one another, and from them שמים (*shamayim*), heavens, were made.” See also BT *Ḥagigah* 12a.

On *Hadrani’el*, whose name alludes to הוד (*hod*), “splendor,” and הדר (*hadar*), “majesty,” see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §826; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Zohar* 1:55b; 2:58a.

46. **This first spirit *Orpeni’el*… is like חשמל (*ḥashmal*)…** Both have the numerical value of 378. In Ezekiel, the precise meaning of the term *ḥashmal* is unclear, but the

context indicates a bright substance. See Ezekiel 1:4: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like ḥashmal from within the fire*. See also 1:27 (the verse immediately preceding the verse cited in this passage). It has been rendered "amber; gleaming amber; glowing metal." In postbiblical literature it was regarded as endowed with holy and dangerous properties. The interpretation of *ḥashmal* as an abbreviation appears in BT *Ḥagigah* 13a–b: "What is חשמל (*ḥashmal*)? Rav Yehudah said, 'חיות אש ממללות (*Ḥayyot esh memallelot*), Fiery beings speaking.'" See *Zohar* 2:81b; *ZḤ* 38b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:591.

According to *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*), *seraphim* (burning ones) emerge from the fusion of the two lights of the second hall. Apparently the *seraphim* are "actualized and not actualized" (or "existent and not existent") in that sometimes they speak, while at other times they are silent.

47. ***In the light of the king's face is life…*** The verse from Proverbs alludes to *Orpeni'el*: באור פני מלך חיים (*Be-or penei melekh ḥayyim*). On this verse, cf. *Zohar* 3:131a, 133b (both *IR*). The verse from Daniel apparently alludes to the trembling knees of *Orpeni'el*, who is fearful of judgment. The full verse (describing Belshazzar's reaction to the writing on the wall) reads: *The king's face darkened, and his thoughts alarmed him; the joints of his loins were loosened and his knees knocked together*. Like thighs, knees also signify the *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Hod*.

48. **garments of the souls of the righteous…** To enter and experience higher dimensions, the soul is enveloped in a radiant garment. According to other passages in the *Zohar*, such a garment is woven out of one's virtuous deeds. Parallels appear in Islamic and Iranian eschatology—and in Mahayana Buddhism, according to which the Buddha enjoys *sambhogakaya* ("a body of bliss"), generated by merit accrued over aeons. The soul's garment

is associated with the צלם (*tselem*), "image," an ethereal body. Before entering a human body, each soul exists in the Garden of Eden, where she is clothed in this *tselem*, which resembles the physical body she will inhabit on earth. As the soul leaves the Garden, she removes the ethereal body and prepares to put on an earthly body. Eventually, when the soul returns to the Garden, upon death, she regains the ethereal body.

The numerical value of *Orpeni'el* equals מלבוש (*malbush*), "garment," i.e., 378. Hence, the souls' garments are stored in this hall. Additionally, the hall corresponds to the *sefirah Hod*, of which is said הוד והדר לבשת (*hod ve-hadar lavashta*), *You are clothed in splendor and majesty* (Psalms 104:1). See also Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 1:170.

On the soul's garment, see *Zohar* 1:38b (*Heikh*), 66a, 82b, 224a–b, 226b, 233b; 2:98b, 150a, 210a, 229b, 231a; 3:69a, 92a–b, 101a, 174b–175a; *ZḤ* 26a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 404; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 56; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 61; Scholem, *Shedim, Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 215–45; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 264–65; Nakamura Hajime, in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Eliade, 2:458. Cf. Mathew 22:1–14; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 36; *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:6; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:35; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 14.

On the ethereal body, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 49:33; *Zohar* 1:7a, 81a (*ST*), 90b–91a, 115b (*MhN*), 131a, 217b, 219a, 220a, 224a–b, 227a–b, 233b; 2:11a, 13a–b, 96b, 141b, 150a, 156b–157a, 161b; 3:13a–b, 43a–b, 61b, 70b, 104a–b, 159b, 169b; *ZḤ* 10b–c, 18b (both *MhN*), 90b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 390; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 276 (133); Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 158–59; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 251–73; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:770–73. Cf. Rashi on BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, s.v. *ve-ruḥot u-nshamot*.

On the angel *Tsadqi'el*, derived from צדק (*tsedeq*), "justice, righteousness," see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 38 (*Battei*

Midrashot, 1:41); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §718; *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*); 108a (*ST*), 149b (*ST*); 3:2b, 154a, 234a; *ZḤ* 64a, 68c (both *ShS*). Here the name may be associated with Isaiah 61:10: *He has wrapped me in a robe of* צדקה (*tsedaqah*), *righteousness*.

49. **River of Fire, where the soul is required to bathe…** To remove the taint of sin. On purification in the River of Fire, see *Zohar* 1:201a, 217b; 2:211b, 254a (*Heikh*); 3:16b (*RM*), 153a (*RM*), 159b, 205a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 373–74; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 54–55, 68–70; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 60 (74–75). On the River of Fire, see Daniel 7:10; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b.

On the renewal of angels, see BT *Ḥagigah* 14a: "Shemu'el said to Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Rav, 'O son of a lion! Come, I will tell you one of those fine words said by your father: Every single day ministering angels are created from the river of fire, chant a song, then cease to be, as is said: *New every morning, immense is Your faithfulness!* (Lamentations 3:23)." See also *Shemot Rabbah* 15:6: "The angels are renewed every day, praise the blessed Holy One, and then return to the river of fire from which they emerged, and God renews and restores them to their former condition, as is said: *New every morning*, [*immense is Your faithfulness*!] (Lamentations 3:23)."

See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:1; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:8; *Zohar* 1:17b, 18b–19a, 40a (*Heikh*), 40b (*Heikh*), 42a (*Heikh*), 44a–b (*Heikh*); 2:144b; *Sidrei de-Shimmusha Rabba* (ed. Scholem), 123–24; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 296–97 (139); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 205; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 65; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:624–25.

The south wind signifies the invigorating power of *Ḥesed*.

50. **ascending as an offering at the hand of Michael the Priest…** According to BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, *Zevaḥim* 62a and *Menaḥot* 110a, Michael offers sacrifices on the heavenly altar. See *Tosafot Menaḥot* 110a, s.v. *u-*

mikhael sar ha-gadol, which notes that according to some passages, these offerings contain the souls of the righteous. See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:12; *Araqim* in *Otsar Midrashim*, ed. Eisenstein, 1:70a; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 292 (137); *Zohar* 1:80a, 81a (both *ST*); 2:37b, 211b, 213b; 3:145b; *ZḤ* 24b, 25a (both *MhN*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 114–116.

On "Ancient of Days," which renders עתיק יומין (*Attiq Yomin*), see Daniel 7:9: As *I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire*. In the *Zohar* this term often designates the primordial *sefirah* of *Keter*.

51. **in charge of all…** Including *Tsadqi'el*.

52. **From this totality—when spirit coalesces with spirit…** Namely, *Orpeni'el* and *Hadrani'el*. See *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*).

On the *seraphim*'s sanctification, see Isaiah 6:2–3. The "three" sanctifications apparently refer to the *Qedushah* preceding the *Shema* in the morning liturgy, the *Qedushah* of the *Amidah* of *Shaḥarit*, and the *Qedushah* of the *Amidah* of *Minḥah*. See *Matoq mi-Devash*. See below, note 59. See *Zohar* 1:40a (*Heikh*).

See BT *Yevamot* 121b, in the name of Rabbi Abba: "The blessed Holy One deals strictly with those around Him, even to a hair-breadth." See *Zohar* 1:140a, 185b.

See *Avot* 6:3: "One who learns from his fellow a single chapter, or a single law, or a single verse, or a single utterance, or even a single letter must treat him with honor." On the prohibition of exploiting (i.e., making use of, putting to work for one's own benefit) one who has studied the orders of Mishnah, see BT *Megillah* 28b. The focus on "six orders" is significant here, since the task of mystic prayer in the *Heikhalot* is to order six halls so that the seventh hall can receive the *Shekhinah*. Note that the six-

winged *seraphim* punish those who mistreat anyone who has studied the six orders of Mishnah.

53. **living being that presides over the *seraphim*...** See *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*). On *Yofi'el*, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy, 34:6; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:206b; 3:2b, 154a, 197b; *ZḤ* 36b, 64a (*ShS*), 68c (*ShS*), 90c (*MhN, Rut*); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§76, 302, 313, 387, 395, 397, 419, 560, 628; *Sidrei de-Shimmusha Rabba* (ed. Scholem), 123; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 65–67.

54. **even from every person...** See M *Avot* 4:1: "Ben Zoma said, 'Who is wise? One who learns from every person, as is said: *From all my teachers have I gained understanding* (Psalms 119:99).'" See Or *Yaqar*, ad loc. "The secret wisdom is not entrusted to one person alone, for everyone has a share in Torah, and what one opens another does not." See *Zohar* 2:134b (*Piq*).

On wardens of judgment, see *Zohar* 2:245b (*Heikh*; above, p. 59 and n. 12).

On the *seraphim* subduing the fiery serpents—as malevolent forces of the Other Side, derived from the primordial serpent of Genesis 3—see *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*). In the Bible, *seraph* is a synonym of other terms for "snake" or "serpent." See Numbers 21:6; Deuteronomy 8:15; Isaiah 14:29; 30:6.

On the emissaries of peace accompanying *Yofi'el* to greet the departed soul, see BT *Ketubbot* 104a, "Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Gamda said in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Sha'ul, 'In the hour when the righteous person departs from the world, the ministering angels say before the blessed Holy One, "Master of the World! The righteous person so-and-so is coming." He says to them, "Let the righteous come [from their resting places], and go forth to meet him." They say to him [the departed righteous], "*Let him enter into peace; let them rest on their couches* [*he who walks uprightly*] (Isaiah 57:2)."' Rabbi El'azar said, 'When a righteous person departs from the world, three companies of ministering

angels go forth to meet him. One says to him, "*Enter into peace*"; the other says, "*He who walks uprightly*," while the other says, "*Let him enter into peace; let them rest on their couches*."'"

Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 27a, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "The fire of Hell has no dominion over scholars."

55. **in accordance with the wisdom pursued and apprehended...** Knowledge of mysteries of Torah is a prerequisite for ascent through the halls. See *ZḤ* 70d (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1086–87. Cf. *Zohar* 1:128a–b (*MhN*).

See also M *Avot* 5:23: "Ben Heh-Heh said, 'According to the exertion is the reward.'" See also *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12.

On displaying knowledge of Torah so as to avoid shame in the world that is coming, see *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 1; *Midrash Mishlei* 10; *Zohar* 2:123b; 3:144a (*IR*), 196b; *ZḤ* 2c (*SO*), 8d (*MhN*), 70d (*ShS*). Cf. *Zohar* 1:4a; 2:134b; 3:205b.

56. **For there is no reward in that world...** See *Zohar* 1:130b: "The inmost realm of all is reserved for those who know the mystery of their Lord...." See also 1:182a; 3:112a (*RM*). On the verse from Proverbs, see *Zohar* 2:49b–50a; *ZḤ* 86b (*MhN, Rut*).

57. **This spirit rules over all...** Namely, *Orpeni'el* who presides over *Yofi'el*. See *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*).

58. **presides over four others...** *Yofi'el* presides over four other living beings—each with four spheres, and each sphere with three supports. See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*), 42a–b (*Heikh*). In Ezekiel, the *galgalim* denote the spheres (or wheels) of the divine chariot-throne. Here, as in the classical *Heikhalot* corpus, they are also a class of angels.

On *Ḥani'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 39 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§359, 363, 427, 716, 770; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). On *Qarashi'el*, see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); *TZ* 70, 130a. *Or*

Yaqar preserves the reading *Qadashi'el*, on whom see *Zohar* 1:40b (*Heikh*), 108a (*ST*); 3:3a; *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). Cf. *Qarishi'el* at *Zohar* 2:252b (*Heikh*). On *Azri'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§222, 372, 494, 501, 504, 582; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:202a, 248b (*Heikh*), 255b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*), 90c (*MhN, Rut*); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 266 (131). On *Ani'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 37 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:40); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §717; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam*.

59. ***Qedushah...*** The *Qedushah*, "Sanctification," appears three times in the morning liturgy: once before the *Shema*, when the angels' recitation is described; during the repetition of the *Amidah*, when the angels join Israel in sanctifying God; and in the prayer "A redeemer shall come to Zion" after the *Amidah*. The main *Qedushah* is recited during the repetition of the morning and afternoon *Amidah*. The central components of the *Qedushah* are Isaiah 6:3: *Holy, holy, holy is YHVH of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory*, and Ezekiel 3:12: *Blessed be the glory of YHVH from His place*. Here, the living beings beneath *Yofi'el* and in the center of the *galgalim* coordinate angels on the right and left who intone the *Qedushah*. See *Zohar* 2:260b (*Heikh*; below, page 158). The two classes of angels allow for two classes of prayer: the former with complete mystical intention, and the latter without. The significance of "Holy above, blessed below" is not clear. Perhaps the recitation by the two classes of angels impacts on different *sefirot*. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

See BT *Ḥullin* 91b; *Bahir* 89 (128); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 56–57; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 149–52; *Zohar* 2:52a, 121b, 129a–b, 132b–133a, 217a; 3:93a (*Piq*), 190b, 297a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 90 (and Wolfson's note); idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 103–5 (131–34); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:968–69.

60. **prophets imbibe from above… masters of a dream or vision imbibe from here…** Prophets attain their prophecy from the sefirotic pair *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* (linked with the second and third halls), whereas dreams and visions derive from this hall alone, not connected with the *sefirot* above. See *Zohar* 2:251b, 257b, 258a, 261b–262a (all *Heikh*). Cf. *Or Yaqar* for a different interpretation.

See *Zohar* 1:183a: "Dream, one rung; vision, one rung; prophecy, one rung—all rungs upon rungs, one above another."

On prophecy as hailing from *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, see *Zohar* 1:151b (*Tos*), 183a, 203a; 2:104b; 3:35a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 337, 369, 378–79; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 47 (57–58).

On dreams hailing from a lower rung, see *Zohar* 1:149a (*ST*), 149a–b, 183a, 191b, 196a, 238a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 369; idem, *Sefer Rimmon*, 126.

See Numbers 12:6–8: *He said, "Hear My words: If there be among you a prophet of YHVH, in a vision I make Myself known to him, in a dream I speak with him. Not so My servant Moses; throughout My house he is trusted. Mouth to mouth I speak with him, in appearance, not in riddles, and the form of YHVH he beholds…."*

61. **their words are parabolic…** Whereas prophets attained their prophecy from *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* filtered through the halls, Moses received his prophecy directly, pristinely, from higher in the sefirotic realm (apparently *Binah*; see *Or Yaqar*) and extending to his rung, *Tif'eret*. This explains the allegorical nature of their prophecy and the unmediated nature of his.

On the unique nature of Moses' prophecy, see BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass, whereas Moses our teacher gazed through translucent glass." See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 7:2, 3, 6; idem, *Guide of the*

Perplexed 2:35, 45. See also *Zohar* 1:170b–171a; 2:82a; 3:268b; *ZḤ* 45c; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 3a.

62. **through another rung beneath, external…** Namely, Gabriel. Just as prophets prophecy through the linking of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* with the halls below, so masters of vision and dream attain their experiences through the linking of the halls with Gabriel below. As noted, in vision and dream the halls are not connected with the *sefirot* above.

On Gabriel as prince of dreams and visions, see Daniel 8:16, 9:22; *Zohar* 1:149b, 183a, 191b, 196a, 238a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 369; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 126.

63. **consequently the matter is not fully lucent** On its long journey from the second hall to the earthly realm, the content of the vision or dream is contaminated by various forces; hence the confused nature of dreams.

See BT *Berakhot* 55a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "Just as there cannot be wheat without straw, so there cannot be a dream without nonsense." According to *Berakhot* 55b, angels convey prophetic dreams, while demons convey false ones. See also *Zohar* 1:83a, 130a–b, 183a, 199b–200a, 238a; 2:130a, 195b, 264a (*Heikh*), 267a (*Heikh*); 3:25a, 156b.

64. **When these four spheres connect…** When the spheres connect with the four beings beneath *Yofi'el* (who presides over the mysteries of wisdom), together they form an entity called "precious" that is the source of visions. Daniel, who beheld visions, is named "precious man" after them.

Daniel 9:23 reads: *A word went forth as you began your plea, and I have come to tell it, for you are precious; so mark the word and understand the vision*. On Daniel's career as being marked by visions (rather than prophecy), see BT *Megillah* 3a. On Daniel as *precious man*, see Daniel 10:11, 19.

65. **Third hall…** In which the *sefirah Netsaḥ* is revealed and active. See *Zohar* 1:42b–43a, 45a (both *Heikh*);

2:257b–258a, 260b, 261b–262a (all *Heikh*). The "four openings" and four directions allude to *Ḥesed, Tif'eret, Gevurah*, and *Malkhut*.

66. **decrees issuing from the court…** From the fourth hall. On *Malki'el* (or *Milki'el*), see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 40 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:42); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§494, 505, 581, 598, 720, 773; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:246a (*Heikh*), 256a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*); *TZ* 70, 129b. See *Or Yaqar*; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 135–36. See Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 1:170, for a close parallel to this and the following paragraph.

67. **emend the configuration of the decrees…** *Malki'el* is tasked with ameliorating the decrees before they are stamped and made official. The realm of the *Heikhalot* is a vast bureaucracy, with decrees and verdicts passing through various halls, with the "paperwork" being shuffled along by numerous officers or bureaucrats. Unlike Kafka's world, this labyrinthine system works in the favor of the individual, since the delays in "processing" allow for decrees to be softened or even rescinded. See Liebes, "Zohar ve-Eros," 82.

On *Sangadi'el*, see *Zohar* 2:264a (*Heikh*; below, page 185), where he is situated in the third opening of the second hall of the halls of impurity; 264b (*Heikh*; below, page 188), where he is situated in the second opening of the third hall of the halls of impurity. See *Or Yaqar*. On his name, cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §682. On wardens of judgment, see above, note 12.

68. ***Shamshi'el… Qemu'el…*** On *Shamshi'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 40 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:42); *Battei Midrashot*, 1:284; *Otsar Midrashim*, ed. Eisenstein, 1:261–62, 287; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§18, 720, 826; *Zohar* 2:202a; 3:154b. On *Qemu'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 38 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§494, 718; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Zohar*

2:58a. See *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the halls and princes of the Other Side, see *Zohar* 2:262b–268b (*Heikh*).

69. **Pit of Destruction…** See *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*; below, page 179), where the names of the first two halls of the Other Side are "Pit" and "Destruction." See also *Zohar* 2:264b (*Heikh*). *Malki'el*'s function—to ameliorate the sentence—is appropriate for the south opening, corresponding to *Ḥesed*.

70. ***Gazri'el…*** On *Gazri'el*, whose name means "God decrees," see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:251b (*Heikh*); 3:3a, 78b; *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*), 90d (*MhN, Rut*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 36.

71. ***Azri'el… Sitriyah… Adi'el…*** On *Azri'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§222, 372, 494, 501, 504, 582; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:202a, 247b (*Heikh*), 255b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*), 90c (*MhN, Rut*); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 266 (131). *Sitriyah* and the variant סנוריא (*Sanorya*) do not appear elsewhere in the *Zohar*. Cf. סטוריה (*Saturiyah*) in *Zohar* 1:149b (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). *Or Yaqar* and O17 preserve the reading *Sitri'el*. On *Adi'el*, see *Zohar* 1:108b (*ST*). See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

72. **shut all six days, but on the Sabbath and the new moon…** See Ezekiel 46:1 describing his vision of the restored Temple in Jerusalem: *Thus said the Lord God: The gate of the inner court facing east shall be shut on the six working days, but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened*. See *Zohar* 1:75a–b; *TZ* 21, 61a; 36, 78a. Cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 51.

73. **as the *Minḥah* prayer passes…** As the final prayer service, *Ne'ilah* (literally "Locking") is about to begin. The *Ne'ilah* service marks the last chance for repentance, before the gates of prayer are sealed shut, when one is finally inscribed for life or death. The Hall of Merit is the fourth hall. The opening of the east corresponds to *Tif'eret*, one of

whose designations is “life.” On the east as the source of life, see *Zohar* 2:246b (*Heikh*).

74. **judgment is inscribed upon a person…** Cf. *Zohar* 2:244b. See BT *Shabbat* 55a, in the name of Rabbi Aḥa son of Rabbi Ḥanina: “The blessed Holy One said to Gabriel, ‘Go and set… a letter of blood upon the foreheads of the wicked, so that the destroying angels may have power over them.’” See *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 7, *Tazri’a* 9.

75. ***Qaphtsi’el…*** Based on the root קפץ (*qafats*), “to jump, leap.” See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§212, 229, 230, 231, 236; *Zohar* 3:3b, 154b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 402. Cf. *Zohar* 2:243a.

76. **‘defective spirit,’ created on the moon’s defectiveness…** *Askara*, “Diphtheria,” is identified with (or associated with) the demoness Lilith, who strikes children with this dread disease. See *Zohar* 2:251a–b, 264b, 267b (all *Heikh*).

See JT *Ta’anit* 4:4, 68b: “On the fourth day [of the week, Wednesday,] they would fast for infants, so that diphtheria would not enter their mouths. *God said, ‘Let there be* מארת (*me’orot*), *lights’* (Genesis 1:14)—spelled מארת (*me’arat*), curse.” In Genesis 1:14, the word מארת (*me’orot*) is written without the *vav*s, the vowel letters. This deficient spelling is interpreted to mean that something was missing on the fourth day of Creation: the light of *Shekhinah*—symbolized by the moon—diminished; and this lack represents the potential for evil or “curse.” See BT *Ta’anit* 27b and Rashi, s.v. *be-revi’i al askara*; *Zohar* 1:19b, 55a, 33b; 2:167b; 3:203a. See also BT *Berakhot* 8a. On the moon’s defectiveness, see BT *Ḥullin* 60b. On *Iri’el*, see *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*).

77. **gazes upon them and has compassion on the world** The soul of the departed youths ascend on high; their presence before God soothes His destructive rage.

See *Kallah Rabbati* 2:9: “It has been taught: Every day an angel ventures forth from the presence of the blessed Holy One to destroy the world and return it to its former

state. But as soon as the blessed Holy One looks upon schoolchildren and the disciples of the wise sitting in the academies, immediately His anger turns to compassion." See also BT *Shabbat* 119b. On the heavenly fate of young children, see also *Zohar* 1:38b (*Heikh*), 41a (*Heikh*), *Zohar* 2:113b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 280–81 (134–35).

78. **until thirteen years… to twenty years… From twenty years…** There are three categories. Until the age of thirteen, one is handed over to *Iri'el* and premature death is caused by *Askara*; from thirteen to twenty, one is handed over to a different spirit named *Agirison* (as explained in the following paragraph); from twenty years on, one is judged in the heavenly court (the fourth hall) for one's own sins—meaning that should death occur, it is "justified."

At the age of thirteen, a Jewish male is bound by the commandments and liable to punishment by a court; at the age of twenty, he becomes liable to punishment from heaven.

On the legal significance of the age of thirteen, see M *Niddah* 5:6; BT *Yevamot* 34a; *Rut Zuta* 1:5 (cited below). On the significance of the age of twenty, see Numbers 14:29; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 24:16; BT *Shabbat* 89b, *Bava Batra* 155a; *Tanḥuma, Qoraḥ* 3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 18:4; *Bahir* 135 (195); *Zohar* 1:118b–119a; 2:97b–98a, 113a–b, 186a–b; 3:293b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 20a (*MhN*), 43d.

See BT *Bava Batra* 16a: "Resh Lakish said, 'Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same.'"

On *Agirison*, see *Zohar* 2:264b (*Heikh*; below, page 189). The name may derive from אגריון (*agriyon*), a Greek word employed in various midrashic passages meaning "wild." Cf. Latin and Castilian *agreste*, "wild." In his gloss, Scholem suggests an association with the demon אגרימוס (*Agrimus*) mentioned in *Midrash Avkir*. See Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 203.

79. **he will eventually become blemished…** Until the age of thirteen, premature deaths are brought about by one's father's sins (see next note). From the age of thirteen until twenty, death is explained as an act of grace—removing the youth from the world before he sins. A child who had accustomed himself to bad behavior while young is particularly susceptible to *Agirison*, the evil impulse, during the impulsive teenage years.

On removing a person from the world while he is innocent (or righteous), see Wisdom of Solomon 4:10–11; *Bereshit Rabbah* 25:1 (and Theodor's note); BT *Ḥagigah* 5a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 6:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:15; *Zohar* 1:56b, 117b–118a (*MhN*), 118b; 2:10b, 96a–b; *ZḤ* 20a–b (*MhN*), 36b (*ST*); Cf. M *Sanhedrin* 8:5; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 218; *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:353).

On the verse in Proverbs, see BT *Ḥagigah* 4b–5a (in the context of people dying before their time); *Zohar* 1:113a, 119a; 2:139a, 196a; 3:54b, 59b, 283b, 291b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 77c (*MhN, Rut*).

On *very good* as signifying the Angel of Death, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 9:10, in the name of Rabbi Shemu'el son of Yitsḥak: "*Behold, it was very good*—this is the Angel of Life; *And behold, it was very good*—this is the Angel of Death." According to Rabbi Shemu'el, the Angel of Death is "very good" because he kills those who fail to accumulate good deeds. According to *Zohar* 2:149b, he is "very good" because the awareness of mortality stimulates a person to return to God. Here, he is "very good" because in plucking the young before their time, he is ensuring that they be taken before they turn bad and sully their soul. See *Zohar* 1:14a, 47a, 144b; 2:68b, 103a, 149b, 163a, 264b (*Heikh*). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 9:5.

80. **judged for his sins…** See *Rut Zuta* 1:5: "Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Abba said, 'Until the age of thirteen, a son is

punished for his father's sins; from then on, each person dies for his own sin."

81. **This opening is to the north** Corresponding to *Gevurah*, "Judgment"; hence the appropriate location for the judgments described in this opening. Each hall has its counterpart on the Other Side.

82. ***Padi'el…*** The name derives from the root פדה (*pdh*), "to redeem." See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §372; *Zohar* 2:252a (*Heikh*). Cf. *Zohar* 1:40b (*Heikh*).

83. ***an angel, an advocate, one among a thousand…*** See BT *Shabbat* 32a: "These are a person's advocates: repentance and good deeds. And even if nine hundred and ninety-nine argue for his guilt, while one argues in his favor, he is saved, as is said: *If he has an angel over him, an advocate, one among a thousand to vouch for his uprightness, then He is gracious to him and says, 'Spare him from descending to the Pit…* (Job 33:23–24). Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Rabbi Yose the Galilean says, 'Even if nine hundred and ninety-nine parts of that angel are in his disfavor and one part is in his favor, he is saved, as is said: *an advocate, one among a thousand* (ibid. 23).'" See *Zohar* 1:13a, 174b; 2:32b, 61a, 252a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 14c (*MhN*).

"The west" corresponds to *Shekhinah*. According to *Or Yaqar*, healing pertains to this opening since *Shekhinah* is *sick* [or: *faint*] *with love* (Song of Songs 2:5, 5:8).

84. **For this reason these four openings…** Each opening serves a particular function, as has been explained.

85. **spirit called נגה (*Nogah*), Brilliance…** See *Zohar* 1:42b, 45a (both *Heikh*). See also [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 275 (133), 282, 288 (135–36) (mentioning the hall *Nogah*). "Brilliance, Radiance" appears numerous times in Ezekiel's vision of the chariot-throne (see Ezekiel 1:4, 13, 27; 10:4). Here it is the hall's chief spirit, who is the source of all splendor and desire.

86. **purest and clearest of those below…** See *Zohar* 1:42b (*Heikh*). *Zohari'el* means "Radiance (or Brilliance) of

God." *Zohari'el* hails from the flow of the World that is Coming—namely the *sefirah Binah*—and is the lamp that illuminates when arrayed with the two halls below. On the verse from Psalms, see *Zohar* 3:204b. In Arabic, the planet Venus (*Nogah* in Hebrew) is called *Zaharah*. On *Zohari'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§111, 231, 418, 517, 974.

87. **emits a single light named *Ahadi'el*...** *Ahadi'el* emerges from *Zohari'el* when the latter is adorned with the lights and spirits of the lower halls. See *Zohar* 1:42b (*Heikh*).

88. **inscribed with the twenty-two letters of Torah...** A mark of the Torah learned by the soul in this world. On the twenty-two letters, cf. *Zohar* 1:42b (*Heikh*); *Zohar* 2:73b, 210a. On the River of Fire and on being offered as an offering, see *Zohar* 2:247a (*Heikh*; above, p. 71 and nn. 49 and 50).

89. **This light is composed of three lights...** *Ahadi'el* is composed of three lights, patterned on the anointing oil streaming from *Binah*, similarly containing three aspects: right, left, and center—or *Ḥokhmah, Binah*, and *Da'at* (the hidden *sefirah*; the synthesis of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*). See *Zohar* 1:42b (*Heikh*). Twenty-two lights flash forth from *Ahadi'el*, under his charge and called by his name. See *Or Yaqar*.

90. **This light together with all those lights merges with this spirit...** *Ahadi'el* and the twenty-two lights merge with *Zohari'el*, which in turn comprises *Ahadi'el*. Together, they yearn for the fourth hall. See *Zohar* 1:42b, 43a (both *Heikh*).

91. **a lion and an eagle—but one form...** See *Zohar* 1:42b–43a (*Heikh*). On *Ahi'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 40 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:42); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §460, 720; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*).

92. **When the radiance of this supreme spirit impacts this living being...** The light of *Zohari'el* strikes *Ahi'el*, generating four multi-colored eight-winged *ophanim*. See *Zohar* 1:43a (*Heikh*).

On the celestial legions manifesting war, cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 21:5, in the name of Rabbi El'azar son of Pedat: "… The blessed Holy One does not cast down a nation before He first casts down their prince [i.e., guardian angel]." See also *Mekhilta, Shirta* 2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:14.

On *Hadari'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 40 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:42); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§124, 195, 427, 501, 581, 720. On *Yahadari'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §195; *Zohar* 3:201b. *Ahadoriya* does not seem to be attested elsewhere. *Asimon* derives from the Greek *asemon*, "without mark; uncoined; shapeless; formless; unperceived." In rabbinic literature (e.g., M *Bava Metsi'a* 4:1) the term refers to uncoined metal and unmarked coin. In *Zohar* 1:14b *Asimon* appears as an amorphous, unperceived demon. See *Or Yaqar*.

On the eight wings of the angels, see Baḥya ben Asher on Numbers 15:38.

93. **from their perspiration…** See *Zohar* 1:43a (*Heikh*). According to numerous rabbinic texts, the River of Fire (see Daniel 7:10) is formed from the sweat of the angelic beings carrying the Throne. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:1; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:8; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4; *Zohar* 2:211b; *ZḤ* 40a.

94. **corresponding to the emissaries of the side of impurity…** The third hall is marked by a pronounced dualism, as the forces of the third hall seek to counter the harmful forces of the third hall of the Other Side.

On Psalms 91:11, see *Tosefta Shabbat* 17:2; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:9; BT *Ta'anit* 11a; *Zohar* 1:12b, 165b; *ZḤ* 48d, 84d (*MhN, Rut*). On Isaiah 8:14, see *Zohar* 1:151b (*ST*); 2:257b (*Heikh*); cf. BT *Sukkah* 52a. Elsewhere in the *Zohar, tested stone* symbolizes *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:140b, 231a–b; 2:230a; 3:168a; *ZḤ* 100c–d (*TZ*).

95. **two spirits called Wrath and Rage…** See *Zohar* 2:264b (*Heikh*; below, page 189). In rabbinic literature, these two nouns are frequently personified as malevolent

powers. See, e.g., *Targum Yerushalmi* on Deuteronomy 9:19; BT *Shabbat* 55a, *Nedarim* 32a; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:7; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 45; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:7, 44:8; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:11; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:2. See also *Zohar* 2:243b; *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*); cf. *Zohar* 3:137b (*IR*).

See BT *Pesaḥim* 8a–b, *Yoma* 11a, *Qiddushin* 39b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Emissaries of a commandment are not harmed."

The verse from Deuteronomy continues: *with which YHVH was furious with you to destroy you*.

96. **another domain situated high above with four openings...** See *Zohar* 1:43a (*Heikh*).

97. **These forty convey the judgment from the Merit-place...** From the fourth hall. The forty deputies correspond to the forty lashes administered by a court of law according to Deuteronomy 25:3. See M *Makkot* 3:10; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Sanhedrin* 17:1; *Zohar* 1:61b; 2:184a.

98. **uttered an unseemly word from their mouths...** See *Zohar* 2:263b (*Heikh*; below, page 182).

99. **Be careful of so-and-so, who is rebuked...** Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Talmud Torah* 7:2–5. See also *Zohar* 3:52b.

Not only is the rebuked soul's prayer not heard, but even at night—when souls ascend on high—the rebuked soul is kept away. On the soul's nocturnal ascent, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:9, in the name of Rabbi Me'ir: "This soul fills the body; and when a person sleeps, she ascends—drawing down life from above." See also *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34; *Zohar* 1:83a, 92a, 121b, 122a (*MhN*), 130a, 183a, 200a; 3:67a, 121b; *ZḤ* 28b (*MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:809–14.

100. ***chamber of the runners...*** See *Zohar* 1:43a (*Heikh*); 3:171b. The context in Kings and Chronicles reads:

In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt marched against Jerusalem and carried off the treasures of the House of YHVH and the treasures of the royal palace. He carried off everything; he even carried off all the golden shields that Solomon had made. King Rehoboam had bronze shields made instead, and he entrusted them to the officers of the guard who guarded the entrance to the royal palace. Whenever the king went into the House of YHVH, the guards would carry them and then bring them back to ta ha-ratsim, the armory of the guards (1 Kings 14:25–28; 2 Chronicles 12:8–11).

The "*ophan* that presides" refers to the prince above the forty deputies in the domain above the middle of the hall. See above at note 96.

The "shields of gold," signifying forces of judgment operating on Israel's behalf, are termed *ḥashmallim*—on which see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:7; see also BT *Ḥagigah* 13b.

101. **runners from this side, runners from that side…** Again the dualism is pronounced, as forces of holiness from the third hall seek to counter the malevolent aims of the forces of the Other Side. The fate of *Shekhinah* (City of Shushan) depends on who arrives first.

In Esther 8:15, the verbs' simple sense corresponds to the English past tense: *The city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad*. Likewise in 3:15: *was dumbfounded*. On Esther 3:15, see *Zohar* 2:244a.

102. **When these ascend with those…** When the deputies ascend with the *ḥashmallim*, "shields." Apparently, the "current of air" originates in *Zohari'el*.

103. **counted among the first ten…** See BT *Berakhot* 47b: "Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi said, 'A person should always rise early to go to the synagogue, so that he will have the merit of being counted in the first ten; since even if a hundred come after him, he receives the reward of them all.' Would you imagine 'the reward of them all'? Say rather: He is given a reward equal to that of them all." See *Zohar* 1:105a (*MhN*); 2:86a; 3:126a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 36.

The *seraphim* (also known as *ḥallonot*) ascend and record the eager worshipers on high and are reckoned by the worshipers as companions.

The verse from Song of Songs is applied to the study of Torah in BT *Shabbat* 63a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish: "When two disciples of the wise listen to one another in *halakhah*, the blessed Holy One listens to their voice, as is said: *You who dwell in the gardens, companions listen for your voice*." See *Zohar* 1:77b, 92a, 178b, 231b; 2:18b (*MhN*), 46a; 3:13a, 22a, 213a; *ZḤ* 13c (*MhN*).

104. **these ascend within this prayer…** The *seraphim* ascend. On prayer being adorned, or becoming a crown for the blessed Holy One, see *Zohar* 2:245b (*Heikh*; above, page 59). The "gate of the highest opening" seems to signify the entrance to the sefirotic realm. On this and the preceding paragraph, see Wolfson, *Luminal Darkness*, 120–21.

105. **perfect intention…** See *Zohar* 1:99b, 161a; 2:180b, 262b (*Heikh*; below, page 172); additions at the end

of the seventh hall of holiness, below, page 177; 3:184a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:952–53.

106. **When it reaches those 'companions'…** When prayer reaches the *seraphim*. As Israel prays below, the angels sanctify on high. The *seraphim*, who are also known as "companions," accompany Israel's prayer during the day. Other angels sing at night.

107. ***He who robs his father and mother…*** See BT *Berakhot* 35b: "Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa said, 'Whoever enjoys something of this world without reciting a blessing—it is as if he robs the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is said: *He who robs his father and mother and says, "It is no crime," is partner to a destroyer—father* is none other than the blessed Holy One… and *mother* is none other than Assembly of Israel.'" In the Talmudic passage, Assembly of Israel apparently refers to a supernal hypostasis (the mother of Israel), as it does regularly in Kabbalah, designating *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:77a (*ST*); 2:193b, 262a (*Heikh*); 3:44b, 270b (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 86c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 104.

On Deuteronomy 32:7, see *Zohar* 3:298b. On Proverbs, 23:25, see *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*); 2:84a, 262a (*Heikh*); 3:55a, 61b, 119a, 156a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 217, 349 (and Wolfson's notes).

In the verse from Proverbs, "partner" renders חבר (*ḥaver*). In the preceding paragraphs *ḥaver* designated "companion." The root *ḥvr* lies at the heart of the following homilies.

108. **The man who taints the moon…** Samael, who seeks to impair *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 3:44b. On "man of perversity" and the verse from Proverbs, see *Zohar* 1:5a; 3:16b, 31a. See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:2. On Psalms 140:12, see *Zohar* 2:152a. Genesis 25:27 describes Esau, conflated here with the demonic Samael; see *Zohar* 1:139a, 146a, 184b.

109. ויתחבר **(*ve-yitḥabbar*), and that he might unite, with these holy** חברין **(*ḥaverin*), Companions…** Perfect prayer joins the worshiper with angelic companions, whereas blemished prayer leads one to partner with Samael, the demonic other side, the primal serpent.

110. וחובר חבר **(*Ve-ḥover ḥaver*), *a chanter of incantations…*** The wordplay continues, elaborating various shades of the root *ḥvr*, "join, fellow, companionship." Sorcery joins one to the Other Side.

Deuteronomy 18:10–11 reads: *There is not to be found among you anyone who passes his son or his daughter through fire, a diviner of divinations, a soothsayer, an augur, a sorcerer, a chanter of incantations, or one who consults a ghost or familiar spirit, or inquires of the dead*. On these verses and on the connection between sorcery and the demonic realm, see *Zohar* 1:99b–100a, 125b–126a, 167a; 2:30b; 3:41b, 70a. On the chanting of incantations, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Avodat Kokhavim* 11:10.

Samael (equated here with the evil impulse) is called *ḥaver*, "fellow," because he joins with a person at birth. See BT *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:13; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:5; *Zohar* 1:110b (*MhN*), 165b, 179a–b; 2:267b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 24b (*MhN*). On the evil impulse as "friend," see BT *Ḥagigah* 16a.

111. **there is a good companion…** The good impulse. The *ḥaverim* are the "windows"—the angelic companions alluded to in Song of Songs 2:9 and 8:13. See above at note 103.

On the counterpoised companions—one on the left, "the Other Side," and one on the right, "the side of holiness"—cf. the numerous passages about a person's two accompanying angels. See BT *Shabbat* 119b; *Ta'anit* 11a; *Zohar* 1:12b, 144b, 165b; 2:106b; *ZḤ* 47a; *ZḤ* 84d (*MhN, Rut*).

112. **From these emerge…** From the twelve *seraphim* (windows or Companions) extend four supports, called

er'ellim. On *er'ellim*, see *Zohar* 2:245b (*Heikh*; above, p. 61 and n. 19).

113. **חרכים (*ḥarakim*), crevices...** Whereas the twelve *seraphim* are called "windows," the four supports (*er'ellim*) are called "crevices." Both are openings to the realm of the spirit.

114. **conceive the thought of a commandment...** See BT *Berakhot* 6a, in the name of Rav Ashi: "If a person thought of performing a commandment but he did not do it because he was prevented by force, Scripture considers him to have performed it." See also *Tosefta Pe'ah* 1:4; BT *Qiddushin* 40a; *Shabbat* 63a; *Midrash Tehillim* 30:4; *Zohar* 2:150b.

115. **console the poor...** See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:15: "*And you offer your soul to the hungry* (Isaiah 58:10). Rabbi Levi said, 'If you do not have what to give him, console him with words. Say to him, "My soul goes out to you—for I have nothing to give you."'" See also BT *Bava Batra* 9b.

See BT *Pesaḥim* 8a–b, *Yoma* 11a, *Qiddushin* 39b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Emissaries of a commandment are not harmed." On "performing an act of true kindness," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 96:5; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 3.

116. **conquer their impulse...** See M *Avot* 4:1, in the name of Ben Zoma: "Who is mighty? He who conquers his impulse, as is said: *He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes* עיר (*ir*), *a city* (Proverbs 16:32)." On an evil thought (which is not counted by God), see *Tosefta Pe'ah* 1:4; BT *Qiddushin* 39b, 40a; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 16; *Midrash Tehillim* 30:4; *Zohar* 2:150b.

117. **apprising him to contemplate his sins...** See [Moses de León?], *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, 21. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 32a: "Rav Yitsḥak son of Rav Yehudah said, 'Let one always pray for mercy not to fall sick, for if he falls sick he is told: Show your merit and be acquitted!'... Our Rabbis taught: One who falls sick and his life is in danger is told, 'Make

confession, for all who are sentenced to death make confession.’” See also BT *Nedarim* 40a, in the name of Rav Dimi: “Whoever visits the sick causes him to live….” See also BT *Nedarim* 41a; *Zohar* 2:61a.

118. ***Happy is the one who considers the poor…*** The word דל (*dal*)—“poor, helpless, powerless”—is interpreted as “sick.” One who shows consideration to the sick is delivered from רעה (*ra’ah*), “evil” (spelled with an additional ה [*he*]), indicating the angel of death, who is associated here with the demonic feminine. See *Or Yaqar*.

See BT *Nedarim* 40a (where visiting the sick saves one from the judgments of Hell); *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 41:2; *Zohar* 1:14b (standard print editions); 2:61a; 3:299a. Cf. *Zohar* 1:15b, where considering the poor alludes to sustaining *Shekhinah*.

119. **all of these assemble…** The angelic powers known as windows and crevices. They adorn themselves in Israel’s good deeds, assuaging divine judgment. See *TZ* 6, 22a. See also *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8.

120. **when Israel blow the shofar…** The sound of the shofar—which is generated by warm, moist breath—comprises three of the four elements, and it stimulates *Tif’eret* (“supernal voice”), who issues from *Binah* (“shofar”), who comprises *Gevurah*, *Ḥesed*, and *Tif’eret* (“fire, water, and air”).

On the mystical significance of the shofar, see *Zohar* 1:114a–b; 2:81b, 184b, 238b; 3:38b, 99b, 99b (*Piq*), 261a; *ZḤ* 20c; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 119–20; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 96, 143–45; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 13b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1245.

121. ***Who know the blast*—smashing this blast…** The full verse reads: *Happy is the people who know* תרועה (*teru’ah*), *the shout of joy* [or: *the* (*horn’s*) *blast*]. *O YHVH, they walk in the light of Your presence*.

The interpretation of יודעי (*yode'ei*), *who know*, as "smashing" apparently derives from Judges 8:16, where the verb וידע (*va-yoda*) seems to mean "punish, flail, smash." Additionally, perhaps תרועה (*teru'ah*), *blast*, is being associated here with the root רעע (*r''*), "to smash."

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:4; *Zohar* 3:18b, 99b, 100b, 148b, 149b, 231b. See also BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16a–b; *Zohar* 1:190a.

122. **any synagogue without windows...** On the need for windows in a house of prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "A person should pray only in a house with windows, as is said: *There were windows in the upper chamber open toward Jerusalem* [*and three times a day he knelt on his knees and prayed and offered praise before his God*] (Daniel 6:11)." See Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *ḥallonot*; *Zohar* 2:59b (*Piq*); 3:114b; Moses de Leon, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 16b.

123. **synagogue parallels synagogue...** The "Great Synagogue" may signify *Malkhut*, the twelve "windows" correlating with the twelve letters of the divine name יוד נון דלת אלף (*aleph dalet nun yod*), spelling אדני (*Adonai*), in which case the "synagogue below" signifies the third hall with the twelve *seraphim* (windows). Alternatively, the "Great Synagogue" designates the third hall with its twelve *seraphim*, in which case the "synagogue below" refers to "real" synagogues—which ought to have twelve windows. See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. See *Zohar* 2:59b (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 8b (*SO*).

On worlds existing correspondingly, see *Zohar* 1:38a (*Heikh*), 57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 205b; 2:5a (*MhN*), 15b (*MhN*), 20a (*MhN*), 48b, 82b, 144a; 3:45b, 65b; *ZḤ* 15a, 19a (both *MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. On the similar Hermetic formulation, see *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262.

124. ***Happy is the one who considers the poor*** See above, note 118.

125. **Fourth hall…** In which the *sefirah Gevurah* is revealed and active. See *Zohar* 1:43b–44a, 45a, 2:257a, 260b (all *Heikh*). See *Zohar* 2:6a, 274b; *ZḤ* 36c (*RR*), which likewise mention the Hall of Merit. On the Other Side, the Hall of Guilt corresponds to this hall (see *Zohar* 2:265a). See also Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (81–82). Given the usual structure of the *sefirot*, one would expect the hall of *Tif'eret* to be placed here. In the *Heikhalot*, however, that hall (the sixth one) follows the halls of judgment and love. See *Or Yaqar*. Though the site of the celestial court, the hall is called זכות (*Zekhut*), "Merit," inclining to one's acquittal and innocence.

126. **a spirit called זכות (*Zekhut*)…** See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*). The four halls are explained below. אל (*El*), "God," is a name of *Shekhinah*, who manifests divine sternness and wrath. See *Zohar* 1:8a, 91a; 2:147a; 3:30b, 119b, 176b. See also Psalms 82:1: *Elohim stands in the assembly of El, among divine beings He pronounces judgment*. The name of the spirit—*Zekhut* and *El*—comprises two aspects: merit (or innocence), and divine judgment. On *Zekhut'el*, cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §207.

127. ***Sansanyah…*** See *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). On his name, see *Or Yaqar*. On the twelve openings and proclamation of judgments, see *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*). Actually, *Sansanyah* does not appear in the Halls of Impurity. On Diphtheria, see *Zohar* 2:248b (*Heikh*; above, p. 80 and n. 76). Perhaps Diphtheria is mentioned here (the fourth hall) because in rabbinic sources it is associated with the fourth day of the week.

128. **seventy sparkling lights, all arranged in a circle…** See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*). The circle of seventy lights resembles the half-circle of seventy-one seated members of the Sanhedrin (seventy and the presiding officer). See M *Sanhedrin* 4:3; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-*

Qodesh, 65 (81). See also *Zohar* 1:229a; 241a; 2:6a; 3:99a (*Piq*), 236b (*RM*). See also Naḥmanides on Numbers 11:16.

129. **From them radiate two lights…** From the seventy. The two lights correspond to the two scribes of the Sanhedrin (see M *Sanhedrin* 4:3). See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*); 2:51b; *ZḤ* 61d (*ShS*). See also BT *Sanhedrin* 37a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 1:4; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 1, where the verse from the Song of Songs is applied to the Sanhedrin. Just as the navel sits in the middle of the human body, the fourth hall sits in the middle of the seven halls. The lights "arranged in a circle" (see previous paragraph) now evoke the moon. See *Or Yaqar*.

130. **two hundred and sixteen lights…** The seventy-two lights in the center (before which merits enter, and from which decisions proceed); the seventy-two on the right; and the seventy-two on the left. The numerical value of גבורה (*Gevurah*), "Judgment," the essential quality of the hall, is 216. The lights emanate from and are contained within *Zekhut'el*. See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*).

131. **The two lights…** They serve as witnesses and scribes. See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*).

132. **three letters are inscribed within him, cleaving from above…** See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*). Cf. *Zohar* 1:159a. The "three letters" apparently signify *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, which together represent the male, now affixed to *El*, the female. Their union ("the cleaving of male in female") was alluded to by David via the word ואלהי (*ve-elohai*), *and my God*, which contains the divine name אל (*El*), God, with the letters י ה ו (*yod, he, vav*). The incorporation of these letters ameliorates the harsh judgment of *El*. See *Or Yaqar*.

133. **These three series of lights…** Namely, the seventy-two lights in each of three locations: the center of the hall; on the right; and on the left. These three series also correspond to the three letters *yod, he, vav*. The three letters and three series of lights correspond to the three

courts that were in Jerusalem (see M *Sanhedrin* 11:2; BT *Sanhedrin* 86b). See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*). The sense of this paragraph is not entirely clear, and precisely how the three courts articulate with the four halls is not immediately apparent. The two series of lights on the right and left are two halls—to which is added another hall for the "masters of eyes," perhaps alluding to the "seven eyes of *YHVH*" mentioned in *Zohar* 1:43b, and the "eyes of *YHVH*" mentioned at 2:252a (*Heikh*; below, page 100). A final hall is for additional scribes beneath the main scribes. According to *Matoq mi-Devash*, the lights on the right and left are courts for determining "riches, poverty, diseases, and wholeness" (i.e., health); and the central lights, for determining capital cases. See *Or Yaqar*; Elijah of Vilna; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash* for various interpretations. On "masters of eyes," see *Zohar* 2:4a (*Mat*), 50b (*Mat*), 202a, 245b (*Heikh*).

134. **In every single opening of these halls...** Each of the four halls in the Hall of Merit has an opening with a particular "prince." On *Gazri'el*, whose name means "God decrees," see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:248b (*Heikh*); 3:3a, 78b; *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*), 90d (*MhN, Rut*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 36. On *Sansanyah*, see above, note 127.

135. **disseminating it in the world...** The judgments rendered in the fourth hall cascade into the world through diverse celestial powers that proclaim the word below. See *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*).

On "birds of heaven" and "fowl of the earth" as conveying "the word," see Ecclesiastes 10:20: *For a bird of heaven will carry the voice, and a winged creature* [lit. master of wings] *will report the word*. The verse is understood as alluding to angels in *Devarim Rabbah* 6:10; *Zohar* 1:34b, 92a; 2:242a; 3:138a (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 203.

On "wardens of judgment," see above, note 12. On the limited foreknowledge of certain celestial beings (usually

demons) and hence the imminent occurrence of the events they convey, see Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:83a, 130a, 200a; 2:195b; 3:25a.

See also BT *Ḥullin* 7b, in the name of Rav Ḥanina: "A person does not bruise his finger below [i.e., here on earth] unless it was so proclaimed against him on high."

136. **convey the information to the kings of the earth, who are on their side** Royal omens (of the kings of the nations), though veridical and beneficial, pertain to the demonic realm. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 89:4; *Zohar* 1:194b. On "the word" passing through the "firmament of the sun," cf. 1:44a (*Heikh*).

137. **information was conveyed to the kings from this opening…** In contrast to the kings of the nations, the kings of Israel received their information from this opening on the side of holiness.

On prophecy as hailing from *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* (the two pillars upon which Torah—the *sefirah Tif'eret*—rests), and on "masters" of vision and dream (deriving from a lower source), see *Zohar* 2:247b (*Heikh*; above, p. 75 and n. 60).

Cf. *Zohar* 1:238a: "In ancient times prophecy rested upon humans, so they knew and contemplated supernal glory. When prophecy ceased, they consulted an echo of the voice. Now prophecy has ceased and the echo has ceased, and human beings consult only a dream." See also *Tosefta Sotah* 13:3; JT *Sotah* 9:12, 24b; BT *Yoma* 9b; *Sotah* 48b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:10.

138. **malignities of the world…** נזיקי עלמא (*Neziqei alma*), "injuries of the world." In the *Zohar*, the phrase implies "demons; malignant spirits." See *Zohar* 1:100a, 201b; 3:122a; *ZḤ* 16c (*MhN*).

See BT *Shabbat* 104a: "Resh Lakish said, '… If one comes to defile himself, he is provided an opening; if one comes to purify himself, he is given assistance.'" See also BT *Yoma* 38b–39a.

139. **Boiling צואה (*Tso'ah*), Excrement...** On boiling excrement, cf. BT *Eruvin* 21b, in the name of Aḥa son of Ulla: "Whoever mocks the words of the sages is punished in boiling excrement." See BT *Gittin* 57a; *Zohar* 2:150b. On the interpretation of Isaiah 30:22, see JT *Shabbat* 9:1, 11d; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 13:2; *Zohar* 1:190b; 2:265b (*Heikh*; below, page 193); 3:238a.

See BT *Yoma* 39a: "Our Rabbis taught: *Do not defile yourselves with them, and thus become defiled* (Leviticus 11:43). If one defiles himself slightly, he is defiled greatly; [if one defiles himself] below, he is defiled from above; in this world, he is defiled in the world to come."

140. **Second opening...** The opening of the second of the four halls within the Hall of Merit. On *Dahari'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §207; *Zohar* 2:256a (*Heikh*). On *Padi'el* and the verse from Job, see *Zohar* 2:249a (*Heikh*; above, p. 82 and nn. 82 and 83).

On sickness as being confined or imprisoned, see BT *Shabbat* 32a; *Zohar* 2:61a, 199a; 3:299a–b.

141. **Third opening...** The opening of the third of the four halls within the Hall of Merit. On *Gadi'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 39 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§211, 494, 644, 719; *Zohar* 1:108b (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). Cf. [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 288 (136). *Or Yaqar* associates the name with Daniel 4:11: גדו (*Goddu*), *Hew down, the tree; lop off its branches*. *Gadi'el* ushers in the sins, whereas *Dahari'el* ushers in the merits. See also Scholem, "Meqorotav shel 'Ma'aseh Rabbi Gedi'el ha-Tinoq,'" 278–80. On wardens of judgment, see above, note 12.

142. **Fourth opening...** The opening of the fourth of the four halls within the Hall of Merit. On scales of equity, see *Zohar* 1:33b; 2:95b, 175b, 255a–b (*Heikh*); *TZ, Haqdamah*, 17b; 5, 19b. See also *Zohar* 2:61b. On מתקלא (*matqala*), "scale," see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 329–332. When virtues dominate, *Hari'el* tips to the right; when vices

dominate, *Gedudi'el* inclines to the left. See *Zohar* 2:265a (*Heikh*). On *Hari'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 38 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41). On *Gedudi'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§581, 774. *Zekhut* (or *Zekhut'el*) is the chief spirit of the hall.

143. **generates a holy living being... *Tumi'el*...** See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*). On *Tumi'el*, see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*); *TZ* 70, 129b.

On the "eyes of *YHVH*," see *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*; above, p. 38 and n. 85); 2:251b (*Heikh*; above, page 96) on the "masters of eyes" in the third of the four halls in the Hall of Merit. See Zechariah 4:10: *These seven are the eyes of YHVH, ranging over the whole earth*. See also 2 Chronicles 16:9: *For the eyes of YHVH range over the entire earth*.

On whole-heartedly intended deeds not carried out, cf. *Zohar* 2:250b (*Heikh*; above, page 91). See also BT *Berakhot* 6a. Cf. *Zohar* 2:243b.

144. **seventy-two lights who adjudicate them...** The seventy members of the Sanhedrin and the two scribes. See *Zohar* 2:251a (*Heikh*; above, p. 95 and nn. 128 and 129). See also 2:6a, where requests are said to be located in the Hall of Merit.

145. **Beneath this living being are four flaming *seraphim*...** See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*). On *Seraph'el*, cf. *Seraphi'el* in *Bereshit Rabbati* on Genesis 5:5; *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 39 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§42, 418, 493. On *Baraqi'el*, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 40 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:42); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§ 18, 21, 363, 720; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 280 (134). On *Qarishi'el*, cf. *Qarashi'el* in *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:247b (*Heikh*). On *Qedumyah*, see *Zohar* 2:256a (*Heikh*).

146. **seventy-two *galgalim*, spheres, flaming with fire...** See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*). See Daniel 7:9, describing the throne of the Ancient of Days: *Its wheels* [*galgalim*]

blazing fire. See also Daniel 7:10: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him, a myriad of myriads attending Him*.

According to numerous rabbinic texts, the River of Fire is formed from the sweat of the angelic beings carrying the Throne. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:1; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:8; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4; *Zohar* 2:211b.

147. **River of Fire flows, burning countless spirits and numerous rulers…** See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*). Throughout the week, the River of Fire punishes the wicked, as well as the celestial princes of the nations. On Sabbath, it abates; and *Tumi'el* enters a special abode within the hall.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 13b: "Where does the river of fire pour forth? Rabbi Zutra son of Toviah said in the name of Rav, 'Upon the heads of the wicked in Hell.'"

On the punishment of angels or heavenly princes of the nations in the river of fire, see *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:60); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot), 530; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 296–97 (139); *Zohar* 1:69a; 2:6b, 19b (*MhN*), 49a, 52b, 239b. See also Daniel 7:11–12.

According to numerous rabbinic sources, the torments of Hell cease on the Sabbath. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:5; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33; BT *Sanhedrin* 65b; *Zohar* 1:14b, 17b, 48a, 62b, 197b, 237b; 2:31b, 88b, 136a, 150b–151a, 203b, 207a; 3:94b, 288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 17a–b (*MhN*). See below, *Zohar* 2:256a (*Heikh*; below, page 127).

148. **tables… are arrayed there in this site…** The Sabbath tables of those who delight the Sabbath fittingly are inscribed above in the abode "Delight" within the fourth hall. See *Zohar* 2:63b, 88a–b, 204a; 3:94b; *TZ* 24, 69b.

On the thousands and myriads reciting "Amen," see BT *Shabbat* 119b, in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Yehudah: "Two ministering angels accompany a person on Sabbath eve from the synagogue to his home—one good and one

evil. When he arrives at his home and finds the lamp burning, the table laid, and the bed covered with a spread, the good angel says, 'May it be so on another Sabbath,' and the evil angel unwillingly responds 'Amen.' But if not, the evil angel says, 'May it be so on another Sabbath' and the good angel unwillingly responds 'Amen.'" See also ibid., in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "One should always set his table on Sabbath eve, even if he needs only the size of an olive."

149. ***Then you will delight upon YHVH...*** Those who delight the Sabbath fittingly are blessed first by *Tumi'el* and then finally by *Zekhut'el*, the chief spirit of the hall.

See Isaiah 58:13–14: *If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, from engaging in your affairs on My holy day, and call the Sabbath "delight," the holy of YHVH "honored"; if you honor it by not going your own ways, pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word, then you will delight* על (*al*), *upon* [or: *in*], *YHVH, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob—for the mouth of YHVH has spoken*. The phrase *speaking a word* may refer variously to idle, mundane, or excessive talk, or discussing business, or legal proceedings. The phrase *upon YHVH* is often read by the *Zohar* hyperliterally, meaning "*above YHVH*," i.e., beyond the *sefirah Tif'eret*. See *Zohar* 1:216a, 219a; 2:50b, 83a, 88a–b, 155b; 3:67b–68a, 70b, 94b.

The third meal is eaten on Sabbath afternoon. On the three Sabbath meals, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:25; BT *Shabbat* 117b–118b; *Zohar* 2:88a–b, 204b; 3:94b–95a, 288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 48c; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1234–36.

On the seventy lights, see *Zohar* 2:251a (*Heikh*; above, page 95). The phrase preceding the verse cited by the seventy lights is significant: *your sons, like olive saplings around your table*. See *Or Yaqar*, who notes that the word כן (*ken*), "surely so," has the numerical value of seventy.

150. **that site which is the inverse of this, called נגע (*Nega*), Plague…** Instead of the person's being inscribed above in the site called עוג (*oneg*), "delight," he is cast out by *Tumi'el* and the four subordinate *seraphim*; and he is ushered into a site called *Nega*, "plague"—and thus prevented from sharing in the joy of Sabbath. See *Zohar* 2:265b (*Heikh*; below, page 194), in the description of the fourth hall of the Other Side.

On עוג (*oneg*), "delight," and נגע (*Nega*), "Plague," as opposites, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 2:4. See also *Zohar* 3:273a (*RM*); *TZ* 21, 58a.

151. **the delight of the blessed Holy One and faith…** Apparently meaning that Sabbath delight delights the blessed Holy One (*Tif'eret*) and "faith" (*Shekhinah*), and hence one who does not delight appropriately deserves such a severe punishment. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. Not only Sabbath tables delight God; all festive tables do. See *Zohar* 2:88b; 3:94b.

152. **proclaim all the judgments and all the decrees…** See *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*). Subordinate to the four *seraphim* beneath *Tumi'el* are yet more deputies.

153. **except for three matters—children, life, and sustenance…** See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*). See BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 28a: "Rava said, 'Life, children, and sustenance do not depend on merit but on מזלא (*mazzala*), destiny.'" Rabbi Shim'on reinterprets Rava's statement to mean that judgments pertaining to children, life, and sustenance do not devolve upon the Hall of Merit, but depend on the supernal river, namely the *sefirah Binah*. In the *Zohar, mazzala* is associated with the root נזל (*nzl*), "to flow," and often refers to the flow of emanation from *Binah*. See *Zohar* 1:115a, 137a, 156b, 159b, 160b, 181a, 207b; 2:6a, 266a (*Heikh*; below, page 194), 274b; 3:25b, 77b, 134b (*IR*), 289a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*), 295b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 36c (*RR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 193; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (82); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 1:163, 2:22–23.

154. **it is not that life depends here…** The judgment is rendered here, though the source of life is beyond, in *Binah*. See *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*). The verse from Isaiah is cited in M *Sanhedrin* 10:1 to demonstrate that "all of Israel have a share in the world that is coming."

155. **Fifth hall…** In which the *sefirah Ḥesed* is revealed and active. See *Zohar* 1:44a–b, 45a (both *Heikh*); 2:254b, 256b–257a, 260b (all *Heikh*). According to *Or Yaqar*, the phrase "to illuminate in mystery of faith" alludes to the liturgical section known as the Recitation of the *Shema* and Its Prayers, which pertains to this hall.

Interestingly, in *Heikhalot Bereshit*, the fifth hall is among the most elaborate, whereas in *Heikhalot Pequdei* it receives the most scant attention of all the halls.

156. ***Saneigoryah…*** His name derives from Greek *sunegoria*, "defense, advocacy." Cf. *Sangirya* and *Sangarya*, see *Zohar* 2:130a, 207a.

157. ***Suryah…*** See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§117–20, 152, 204, 219, 425–26, 560; Rabbinovicz, *Diqduqei Soferim, Berakhot* 51a, p. 270, n. 100; *Zohar* 2:154a, 213b; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 144–46.

"White," "black," "green," and "red" correspond to *Ḥesed, Malkhut, Tif'eret*, and *Gevurah* respectively. See *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*).

158. **This is the spirit that opens and closes…** Namely, enabling or withholding the flow of divine bounty. See *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*). On supernal keys, cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §72; *Zohar* 1:37b, 181b, 223b; 3:60a, 171b; *ZḤ* 39d–40a. The "three times a day" refers to the three statutory daily prayers.

159. **Hall of Love…** *Suryah* is also called Love, and indeed the fifth hall is so named. On the Hall of Love, see *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*); 2:97a, 146b, 260b (*Heikh*); 3:267b. On cleaving to the Hall of Love, see *Zohar* 2:254b (*Heikh*; below, page 115).

According to *Or Yaqar*, the verse from Song of Songs is spoken by *Shekhinah* to the blessed Holy One, who—roused by Israel's love below—seeks to convey Her love above.

160. **This spirit guards all the protection on high…** *Suryah* guards the divine bounty descending from above—in particular from the *sefirah Ḥesed*—and passing through *Tif'eret* (Israel) and *Yesod* (Covenant). The phrase "Guardian of the Covenant" also appears in 1 Kings 8:23; Daniel 9:4; Nehemiah 1:5, 9:32; 2 Chronicles 6:14. In all cases the full phrase reads: *Guardian of the Covenant and the Ḥesed, Love*. See *Zohar* 1:47b; 2:226b. Cf. *Zohar* 3:129b (*IR*), 289a (*IZ*).

161. **These four colors within him blend…** The spirit *Suryah* engenders the living being called *Zohar*. See *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*). See also Ezekiel 10:20: *That is the living being that I saw beneath the God of Israel by the river Kevar*. Though this verse is not cited, perhaps the *Zohar* intends that this living being (*Zohar*) lies *beneath the God of Israel* (who would signify *Tif'eret*, corresponding to the sixth hall). See *Or Yaqar*.

162. **in this hall… await all the soul-breaths…** The fifth hall is the heavenly treasure-house of unborn souls. These souls are animated by the kisses of the sixth hall: hence the human being lives on that which emanates from *YHVH*'s mouth. See *Zohar* 2:253b (*Heikh*; below, page 109), the beginning of the sixth hall. The *Zohar* here distinguishes between three levels of soul: *nefesh* (soul), the lowest level, associated with the body; *ruaḥ* (spirit), an intermediate level; and *nishmeta* (soul-breath), the highest level of soul. On the various levels of the soul, see for example, *Zohar* 1:83b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:684–698. According to *Or Yaqar*, the kisses of the sixth hall serve to fuse the lower aspect with the higher aspect by means of the spirit. On "air" (or "ether") as sustaining the soul, see Judah Alḥarizi, *Sefer ha-Nefesh* (attributed to Galenus), ed.

Jellinek, 13; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 407; *ZḤ* 6d (*MhN*); Meroz, "Va-Ani Lo Hayiti Sham?," 170.

See BT *Yevamot* 62a: "Rabbi Assi said, 'The Son of David will not come until all the souls in the body have been depleted.'" The body is the heavenly treasure-house of unborn souls. See 3 Enoch 43:3; Rashi on *Yevamot* 62a, s.v. *mi-shum*; idem on *Avodah Zarah* 5a, s.v. *ad she-yikhlu; Bahir* 126 (184); *Zohar* 1:28b (*TZ*); 119a, 181a; 2:95b, 157a, 161b, 174a; 3:152a; *ZḤ* 10b–c (*MhN*), 53c, 60b, 69b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 93; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:592, 701–2, 749–50; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 179–80, 226.

See also BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, in the name of Resh Lakish: "[There are] seven [heavens].... The one called *Aravot* is where are righteousness, justice, charity, treasuries of life, treasuries of peace, treasuries of blessings, the souls (*neshamot*) of the righteous, and the spirits and souls (*ruḥot* and *neshamot*) that are to be created in the future, and the dew with which the blessed Holy One will revive the dead."

On the descent of souls through the halls, see *Zohar* 2:246a, 259a (both *Heikh*). On *Yesod* as a river conveying the soul, see *Zohar* 1:197a, 198a, 205b, 209a. The image of the flowing, gushing river derives from Daniel 7:10.

163. **King Messiah will arrive, arousing this hall above...** See previous note. The "hall above" apparently designates the fifth hall; and the "hall below," the fourth hall. Alternatively, the "hall above" may allude to the *sefirah Ḥesed* and the "hall below" to the fifth hall. Cf. *Sullam*. On the situation post-destruction, see *Or Yaqar*'s gloss. See page 147 below.

164. ***Shaddai* and *El* below join... and are called *El Shaddai*...** The spirit "Love" and the living being called *Zohar* fuse and emit two lights called *Shaddai*. These two lights join with *El* from the hall below (the chief spirit there being *Zekhut'el*), and together they form the divine name *El Shaddai*. The two lights are called *Shaddai* because they derive from the two breasts (*shadayim*) of the hall, Love and *Zohar*. On the

verse from Song of Songs, see *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*). On the motif of breasts in the *Zohar*, see Haskell, *Sucking at My Mother's Breasts*.

The obscure divine name *El Shaddai* may originally have meant "God of the mountain." The traditional rendering "Almighty God" is unjustified.

As will become clearer below, the fifth hall pertains to breasts, the sixth hall to lips and kisses, and the seventh hall to complete sexual union.

165. **it is called *Shaddai*, for it supplies sustenance...** In the fourth hall, *El* conveys the bounty from above. In the fifth hall, *Shaddai* nourishes all those below from the bounty it receives from *Ḥesed* above. The lights are named *Shaddai*, not only because they suckle like breasts, but also because they supply דַּי (*dai*), "ample," sustenance to those below. See *Zohar* 2:256b–257a (*Heikh*; below, page 132).

On the midrashic interpretation of *Shaddai* as "enough, ample, sufficient," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:8; BT *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Tanḥuma, Ḥayyei Sarah* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 11; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3.

The *pegs of the Dwelling* (together with ropes) held down the linen hangings that bounded the court of the Dwelling (or "Tabernacle"). Here they are angelic powers. See *Zohar* 2:229a, 255a–b (*Heikh*).

166. ***the flame of the ever-turning sword... turn various shades...*** That is, forces of judgment, which apparently emanate from the living being called *Zohar*. See *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*; above, p. 43 and nn. 95 and 96); 2:266a (*Heikh*; below, page 196). See *Bereshit Rabbah* 21:9: "*Ever-turning*—changing: sometimes male, sometimes female; sometimes spirits, sometimes angels." See also BT *Yoma* 75a, where demons are said to "turn many colors."

167. **When this spirit branches out...** Apparently referring to *Suryah* (Love). See *Zohar* 1:44a–b (*Heikh*). For a different interpretation, see *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*,

according to whom the spirit designates *Shaddai*—who separates from *El*, only to fuse again and generate another living being.

168. **This one is called [שבע (*Sova*), Abundance]...** Namely, the aforementioned living being. On the impure spirits Plunder and Famine, see *Zohar* 2:266a (*Heikh*; below, page 196). See also *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 1:1, 110b: "*You will eat your bread* לשבע (*la-sova*), *to satiety* (Leviticus 26:5)—... you will eat a little and feel contented within." See *Or Yaqar*.

The manuscripts and printed editions seem garbled here; and there is a lacuna in the text. That the name of the living being is *Sova* is not attested, though it is clearly missing; I have followed Margaliot's emendation.

169. **This living being emits a single spark...** Apparently designating the living being called *Zohar*. See *Zohar* 1:44a–b (*Heikh*; above, pp. 43–44 and n. 96).

170. **vines... pomegranates...** Signifying powers of love. See Song of Songs 7:13: *Let us go early to the vineyards to see if the vine has budded, if the blossoms have opened and the pomegranate is in flower. There I will give you my love*. See *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*). *Or Yaqar* associates the "two princes" with *El Shaddai*, noting that breasts arouse love. The phrase "Then love below within higher love" may refer to the union of Israel and God's love. Alternatively, it may point to the impending union between the divine male and female. Yet another possibility: the Hall of Love unites with its *sefirah Ḥesed*. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:993.

171. **enact the unification of their Lord... lovingly surrender their souls...** See *Or Yaqar*: "The mystery of one's love of the blessed Holy One, through the unification of the recitation of the *Shema*, with the intention of surrendering one's soul for His love and unity." According to Cordovero, the two princes are called אה (*alef, he*) and בה (*bet, he*), spelling אהבה (*Ahavah*), "Love."

On surrendering one's soul, see M *Berakhot* 9:5: "*You shall love* YHVH *your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might* (Deuteronomy 6:5)… *with all your soul*—even if He takes your soul." See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; BT *Berakhot* 61b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 43–44.

In the Masoretic text, the opening line of the *Shema, Hear O Israel!* YHVH *our God,* YHVH *is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4), is marked by a large letter ע (*ayin*) in the word שמע (*shema*), *Hear*, and by a large letter ד (*dalet*) in the word אחד (*eḥad*), *one*. Together these large letters spell עד (*ed*), "witness." Though not stated explicitly, this idea may lie behind the motif of the princes' offering testimony on high. On the *ayin* and *dalet* forming עד (*ed*), "witness," see Asher ben David, *Peirush Shelosh Esreh Middot*, 62; Jacob ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Otiyyot*, 208; *Zohar* 2:160b; 3:236b; *ZḤ* 57a; Moses de León, *Or Zaru'a*, 252; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 75; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 79 (100–101); idem, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 26; *Ba'al ha-Turim* on Deuteronomy 6:4.

172. **ascending to be adorned within Love Supreme…** Deeds of *ḥesed*, "loving-kindness," that have been performed below ascend to the fifth hall, the Hall of Love, which is associated with the *sefirah Ḥesed*; ultimately, they ascend to higher Love—the *sefirah* itself. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1452, n. 76. See *Zohar* 2:254b (*Heikh*; below, page 115) on Rabbi Akiva's linking lesser love with great love, the Hall of Love with *Ḥesed*.

On the verse from Psalms, indicating *Ḥesed* beyond heaven, i.e., beyond *Tif'eret*, see *Zohar* 1:219a; 2:6a; 3:16a. See also BT *Pesaḥim* 50b. On the verse from the Song of Songs, see *Zohar* 1:245a; 2:146b (also on the Hall of Love); 3:54b, 267b (also mentioning the Hall of Love).

173. **Sixth hall…** In which *Tif'eret* is revealed and active. This is the hall of *Ratson*, "desire, favor, will, good-will." This hall contains the mystery of lips and kisses, whereby the

lower six halls unite with the six central *sefirot*. See *Zohar* 1:44b–45a (*Heikh*); 2:260b (*Heikh*).

"Will of Wills" designates *Keter*, the highest *sefirah*, located on a direct line high above *Tif'eret*, who is stimulated by prayer. On this epithet, see *Zohar* 2:88b, 176b (*SdTs*); 3:129a, 136a–b, 137b (all *IR*), 288b (*IZ*).

On the verse from Deuteronomy and the issuance of souls, see *Zohar* 2:253a (*Heikh*; above, page 106) in the description of the fifth hall.

174. **it is known as עת רצון (*et ratson*), a time of favor...** The verse from Psalms describes the approach of *Shekhinah*, known as "prayer," to *Tif'eret*, known as *YHVH*. *Shekhinah* is also known as "time"; and when the halls and *sefirot* are united through prayer (Jacob's kissing Rachel), a "time of favor" prevails: *Shekhinah* is joined with "favor"—signifying *Keter* (though here indicating *Tif'eret* situated beneath)—and receives the divine flow. On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:116b; 2:156a; 3:129a (*IR*). On *time of favor*, see *Zohar* 2:256b (*Heikh*; below, page 131).

On Jacob's kissing Rachel, indicating the union of *Tif'eret* with this hall, and more generally the union of the six central *sefirot* with their respective halls, see *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*). See also *Zohar* 2:97a, 146b; 3:250b; *ZḤ* 64b (*ShS*).

175. ***Razi'el*...** The chief spirit of the hall. His name derives from רז (*raz*), "secret"; and celestial mysteries are his domain. Such mysteries must be uttered lovingly from mouth to mouth, i.e., secretly—a somewhat ironic statement in light of the *Zohar*'s grand written disclosure of secrets. On *Razi'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §549; *Zohar* 1:55b, 108a (*ST*), 149b (*ST*); 3:2b; *ZḤ* 64a (*ShS*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 180–182.

The "four openings" correspond to the sefirotic quartet *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*, while the two remaining openings ("above" and "below") apparently signify *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*.

176. **These gates are not capable of being revealed…** The gates of the Hall of Desire remain concealed, since Desire is rooted in *Keter* (Will); hence they are revealed only through the agency of *Keter*. When the gates are open, divine bounty flows from *Keter* through *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*—and infuses this hall and all the other halls below. "Aspirations," "intentions," and "desires" all render רעוי (*ra'avei*).

177. **This is the hall of Moses…** In the *Zohar*, Moses signifies *Tif'eret*. During his life, Moses was attached to this hall; and he was gathered to this hall in his death by divine kiss. According to rabbinic tradition, certain virtuous heroes (including Moses, Aaron, and Miriam) died not by the power of the Angel of Death but rather by God's kiss: *by the mouth of YHVH* (Numbers 33:38; Deuteronomy 34:5). See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 34:5; BT *Bava Batra* 17a (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *she-lo shalat*); *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 42; *Tanḥuma, Va'etḥannan* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'etḥannan* 6; *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*); 2:124b. Cf. *Zohar* 2:88b–89a; 3:129a (*IR*).

The verse from Exodus alludes not only to the intimacy enjoyed between Moses and God that transpired in this hall, but also to the union of the divine male and female, *Tif'eret* (Moses) and *Malkhut* (*Elohim*), which is initiated in this hall. On the verse, see *Zohar* 2:19a (*MhN*); 3:7a, 265a. See next note.

On the spiritual significance of a kiss and of the verse from Song of Songs (understood here as expressing *Malkhut*'s desire to be kissed by *Tif'eret*), see *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*), 70a; 2:124b, 146a–147a, 256b (*Heikh*; below, page 128); *ZḤ* 60c (*MhN, ShS*), 63a, 64b (both *ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 396; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 372. On the entire paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*.

178. ***Moses would speak… And Elohim would answer him in a voice…*** *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut* engage in reciprocal

flirtation and courtship, through verses from the Song of Songs.

179. **To this spirit have been entrusted all the mysteries…** *Razi'el* is in charge of particularly noble souls, who need not endure the purification of the River of Fire. The arousal of "love above and below as one" apparently indicates the union of fifth hall with *Ḥesed*, as exemplified by Rabbi Akiva. See *Zohar* 2:254b (*Heikh*; below, page 115).

On "Rabbi Akiva and his companions," see *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*; above, p. 9 and n. 17), where the phrase is used in the context of his martyrdom. On purification in the River of Fire, see *Zohar* 2:247a (*Heikh*; above, p. 71 and n. 49).

180. **This spirit emits twelve lights…** See *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*). The essence of those twelve are the "four supernal lights," which are the four archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel (Nuriel). See 2:255a (*Heikh*; below, page 120). See also 1:40b (*Heikh*; above, p. 20 and n. 37), in the sixth abode, on the angels and their associated cardinal directions.

181. **To the south… Michael…** Michael is associated with the south and the right, namely with the divine quality of *Ḥesed*.

On Israel beginning their journey into the mystery of faith through *Ḥesed*—the first of the six central *sefirot* grouped around *Tif'eret*—see Exodus 14:31: *Israel saw the great hand that YHVH had wielded against Egypt, and the people were in awe of YHVH; and they believed in YHVH and in Moses His servant*.

182. **Israel's grand guardian…** See Daniel 10:13, 21, 12:1; *Shemot Rabbah* 18:5; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 44; *Zohar* 2:139a; *ZḤ* 23d (*MhN*). On the verse from Lamentations, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:6; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; 2:6; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 15; *Zohar* 1:163b; 2:143b, 203b; 3:74a. The "accuser" is Samael.

183. **To the north is stationed another light…** Gabriel, associated with north and the left—the divine quality of *Gevurah*, "Judgment." When Gabriel administers the judgment himself (in place of merely conveying it to the Other Side), the judgment simultaneously contains healing. On the prince of the opening of the fourth hall, see *Zohar* 2:251a (*Heikh*; above, page 95).

184. **Gabriel comprises two modes…** Even though Gabriel hails from the north, which is associated with *Gevurah*, in fact he entails both *Gevurah* and *Ḥesed*—referred to as the "blow and the healing," respectively. On Gabriel as containing the right, see *Zohar* 2:231a.

"Chastenings of love" are intended to test or refine the individual and increase his merit. See BT *Berakhot* 5a: "Rava (some say Rav Ḥisda) said, 'If a person sees sufferings coming upon him, he should scrutinize his actions…. If he does so and finds nothing [deserving of punishment], he should attribute it to neglecting the study of Torah…. If he does so and finds no [such neglect], then these are surely chastenings of love, as is said: *For the one who YHVH loves He reproves, as a father the son he delights in* (Proverbs 3:12).' Rava said, in the name of Rav Saḥora, in the name of Rav Huna, 'Whomever the blessed Holy One delights in, He crushes with sufferings, as is said: *YHVH delights in crushing him by disease* (Isaiah 53:10).'" See also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; BT *Berakhot* 5b; *Qiddushin* 40b; *Zohar* 1:180b; 2:244b; 3:46a.

185. **To the east is stationed another light…** Raphael, whose name means "God heals," is appointed over healing, which is associated with the east here.

On illnesses completing their faithful mission, see BT *Avodah Zarah* 55a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "What is the meaning of the verse *Malignant and faithful illnesses* (Deuteronomy 28:59)? *Malignant* in their mission and *faithful* to their oath [to leave the person at the prescribed time]." See *Zohar* 1:227a–b; *ZḤ* 10d (*MhN*).

In *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:10; *Zohar* 1:40b (*Heikh*); 3:118b, 154b–155a, and *ZḤ* 13b (*MhN*), Raphael is aligned with the west (rather than the east). See below, note 187. On Raphael, see also *Zohar* 1:46b, 99a (*ST*); 2:98b; 3:204a.

186. **for it hails from two aspects…** Because Raphael embraces the qualities of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, the healing that he brings is accompanied by duress.

187. **Thus he is from the west…** Raphael is indeed from the west, though he is attributed also to the east, the source of healing, correlated with *Tif'eret*, the Tree of Life, from where life streams below to *Malkhut*. On the east as the source of life, see *Zohar* 2:246b (*Heikh*; above, page 68). See Elijah of Vilna, ad loc.

188. **On this side is one light named Nuriel…** No cardinal direction is specified. See *Matoq mi-Devash*. Nuriel, who is also known as Uriel, comprises the qualities of Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael—just as *Malkhut* comprises *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. He is the agent of all three archangels. Nuriel possesses three aspects, from each of the angels—though these are in fact two, since Gabriel is comprised within Michael, and since east and west (*Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*) are sometimes combined. On Uriel, see *Zohar* 1:40b (*Heikh*).

189. **four lower elements derive…** The four archangels are rooted in the four supernal elements, namely the sefirotic quartet *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*. Just as the four chambers of the nut are connected, so these four *sefirot* interlink. On the verse from the Song of Songs and the motif of the nut, see *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*; above, p. 46 and n. 101).

The theory of the four elements was introduced by Empedocles and adopted by Plato, Aristotle, and most of their successors. It dominated Western cosmology until the Renaissance. According to this theory, everything below the sphere of the moon is composed of various combinations of

fire, air, water, and earth—all of which interact and are capable of transforming into one another.

See Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* 2:1–8; *Sefer Yetsirah* 3:3–4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:10–11; 4:1–6; idem, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:72, 2:30; Moses de León, *Sefer Or Zaru'a*, 267–68; *Zohar* 1:5b, 39b (*Heikh*), 80a (*ST*); 2:13b, 23b–24a; 3:170a. In *MhN* see *ZḤ* 6d, 10a, 13d, 16b; *Zohar* 1:122b.

190. **twelve lights are sustained by the spirit…** Eight other lights lie beneath the four archangels—all twelve lights being beneath the spirit *Razi'el*, the hall's chief spirit. See *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*). On the arrangement of the twelve angels in four groups of three, see also *Zohar* 1:159a–b; 2:228a. See also *Zohar* 1:149b (*ST*).

191. **unite this hall above, in the site called Heaven…** The four archangels unite the sixth hall with its *sefirah Tif'eret*, known as Heaven. See *Zohar* 1:44b–45a (*Heikh*). Various celestial forces emanate from the archangels below, correlated with the four elements. Water is linked with *Ḥesed* (Michael), fire is linked with *Gevurah* (Gabriel), air with *Tif'eret* (Raphael), and dust or earth with *Malkhut* (Uriel).

192. **Four entered an orchard…** See BT *Ḥagigah* 14b, the famous account of the four rabbis who engaged in mystical search: "Four entered *pardes*, an orchard [whence: paradise]: Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Aḥer, and Rabbi Akiva…. Ben Azzai glimpsed and died…. Ben Zoma glimpsed and went mad…. Aḥer severed the saplings. Rabbi Akiva emerged in peace."

See *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:3; JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§338–39, 344–45, 671–72. See also *Zohar* 1:26b (*TZ*); 3:223b (*RM*); *TZ, Haqdamah*, 11b; *ZḤ* 18c (*MhN*). See *Or Yaqar*; Elijah of Vilna, ad loc.; and *Matoq mi-Devash*. The *Zohar* here locates the *pardes* in the realm of the halls.

"Were selected" renders אתברירו (*itberiru*). The root ברר (*brr*) has a range of meanings in the *Zohar*: "select, refine, purify, confirm."

193. **consummated lesser love with great love…** Rabbi Akiva joined the Hall of Love (lesser love) with the *sefirah Ḥesed* (great love). See *Zohar* 1:11b, 181a; 2:256b (*Heikh*; below, page 131); 3:263b (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 52b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:987, 993, 1416. The term אהבה זוטא (*Ahavah zuta*), "lesser love" or "small love," is also associated with *Malkhut*.

On Rabbi Akiva's death, see BT *Berakhot* 61b: "Rabbi Akiva said, '[*You shall love YHVH your God*] *with all your soul* (Deuteronomy 6:5)—even if He plucks your soul.'… When Rabbi Akiva was brought out to be executed [by the Romans], it was the time for reciting the *Shema*. While they were combing his flesh with iron combs, he accepted upon himself the Kingdom of Heaven [by reciting the *Shema*]. His disciples asked him, 'Our teacher, even this far?' He replied, 'All my days I have been troubled by this verse: *with all your soul*, [which I interpret] "even if He plucks your soul." I said, "When will I have the opportunity to fulfill this?" Now that I have the opportunity, shall I not fulfill it?' He prolonged the word אחד (*eḥad*), *one*, [in the verse: *Hear O Israel! YHVH is our God, YHVH is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4)] until his soul departed with *one*. A voice echoed from heaven: 'Happy are you, Akiva, whose soul has departed with *one!*'" See also Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 43–44.

194. **Elisha descended below…** In contrast to Rabbi Akiva—who proceeded to the right, cleaving to water (*Ḥesed*)—Elisha descended to the left, to the element of fire (*Gevurah*). On his quest he encountered and succumbed to *another god*, hence his nickname *Aḥer*, "the other, another." See *Zohar* 1:204b; *ZḤ* 24d (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 150. See *Or Yaqar*, according to whom *Aḥer* failed to raise the lower *Gevurah* to its source in the *sefirot*. According to *Or Yaqar*, Ben Azzai and Ben Zoma also failed

to connect their particular element with its source in the *sefirot*.

On Elisha son of Avuyah, the most famous heretic in rabbinic literature, see *Tosefta Ḥagigah*, 2:3; JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1–2, 77b–c; BT *Ḥagigah* 14b–15a, *Qiddushin* 39b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4.

195. **Ben Azzai descended into the element of dust…** "Dust" is correlated with *Malkhut*; and "burnt dust" (ash), the barren refuse of holy dust, with the demonic realm. See *Zohar* 1:80a (*ST*), 170a; 2:266b (*Heikh*; below, pages 198–99). See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. See *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:3; BT *Ḥagigah* 14b, where the verse from Psalms is applied to Ben Azzai. See also BT *Berakhot* 57b.

196. **Ben Zoma descended into the element of** רוחא **(*ruḥa*), air…** Air is correlated with *Tif'eret*. According to *Tosefta Ḥagigah*, 2:3 and BT *Ḥagigah* 14b: "Ben Zoma glimpsed and נפגע (*nifga*), went mad." *Pega Ra* also implies "encountering evil." The phrase "he came upon him" might imply that the spirit harmed him, or that he encountered the evil spirit.

197. ***righteous people treated according to the conduct of the wicked…*** On the verse from Ecclesiastes, cf. *Zohar* 2:10b.

198. **bewildered how these were slain…** As just noted by the *Zohar*, Rabbi Akiva survived his mystical quest intact. Even so, his fate was to be counted among the martyrs of Israel during the Hadrianic persecutions of the second century. Rabbi Shim'on wonders: How could he and the other martyrs—righteous innocents—be deserving of death at the hands of the Romans? Surely they deserved to die by divine kiss and be gathered to *Shekhinah*. The complex verse in Psalms provides the key. Their souls were indeed gathered to God: *by Your hand, O YHVH*. Their bodies, however, were handed over to the Other Side, signified by the word חלד (*ḥeled*), whose range of meanings include

“fleeting; duration of life; world; rust.” Here the latter sense pertains, with rust signifying the Other Side. The rare word חדל (*ḥadel*) at the end of the verse in Isaiah is usually understood as a metathesis of the pausal form of חלד (*ḥeled*), “world.” Here the verse is cited to support the identification of *ḥeled* with the Other Side, as though God says: I will not gaze upon those who reside with the Other Side. In rabbinic texts, ממתים (*mi-metim*) *from men*, is interpreted midrashically to mean *from them that die*. On this complex homily, see *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

See BT *Berakhot* 61b and *Tanḥuma, Ki Tavo* 2 (where the verse from Psalms is applied to Rabbi Akiva’s death); *Midrash Tehillim* 17:13 (where the verse is applied to the martyrs); Eisenstein (ed.), *Otsar ha-Midrashim, Asarah Harugei Malkhut*, 445. On the verse from Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:65b. On the ten martyrs, see next note.

199. **ten spirits from below…** The souls of the Ten Martyrs. Their death impacts the divine realm, consummating Holy Spirit—indicating *Shekhinah, Tif’eret*, or *Binah*, or more generally the divine life. See *Or Yaqar, Matoq mi-Devash, Sullam*. Just as with a sacrifice, whose smoke and holy intentions ascend on high while the flesh is consumed as the portion of the Other Side, so too with the martyrs: their souls for God; their bodies for the “wicked kingdom,” signifying Rome and the Other Side. See *Zohar* 1:65a; 2:269a. See below, *Zohar* 2:257b (*Heikh*; below, page 136).

On the story of the Ten Martyrs, see *Midrash Tehillim* 9:13; *Midrash Mishlei* 1:13; *Elleh Ezkerah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:64); Eisenstein (ed.), *Otsar ha-Midrashim, Asarah Harugei Malkhut*; Musaf Yom Kippur Liturgy; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§107–121, 139; *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 46a, 89c–d (*MhN, Rut*); Stern, *Rabbinic Fantasies*, 143–65; Reeg, *Die Geschichte von den Zehn Märtyrern*.

200. **clarifying refuse from within thought…** At the very beginning of the process of emanation, a spark of darkness fired forth from within the depths of *Ein Sof* and *Keter*, entering thought—*Ḥokhmah*—and thus sowing the seed of all being. This movement marks the origin of the sefirotic structure. It also serves to eliminate the dross within divine thought, enabling the emergence of a stable configuration of divine potencies. Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, the sparks "hurling in [320] directions" are explicitly connected with former worlds created and destroyed by God (as in *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:7). See *Zohar* 3:292b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 46c, mentioning the "evil thought" within divinity. See also *Zohar* 1:107b (*ST*); 2:34b; 3:48b; 128a (*IR*), 135b (*IR*). See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:276–77, 289–90; 2:458–59; Idel, "Ha-Maḥashavah ha-Ra'ah shel ha-El"; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 134–35, 188, n. 182. The number 320 may allude to the thirty-two paths of wisdom (*ḥokhmah*) mentioned at the beginning of *Sefer Yetsirah*. See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*.

"Spark of impenetrable darkness" renders דקרדינותא בוצינא (*Botsina de-qardinuta*). The spark is so potently brilliant that it overwhelms comprehension. Many mystics convey similar paradoxical images: "a ray of divine darkness" (Dionysius, *Mystical Theology* 1:1); "the luminous darkness" (Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Moses* 2:163); "the black light" (Iranian Sufism; see Corbin, *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism*, 99–120). Prior to the *Zohar*, Azriel of Gerona and the author of *Ma'yan ha-Ḥokhmah* mention "the light darkened from shining." See Verman, *The Books of Contemplation*, 59–60, 158–59; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 336. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:59: "We are dazzled by His beauty, and He is hidden from us because of the intensity with which He becomes manifest, just as the sun is hidden to eyes too weak to apprehend it." See the wealth of material collected and

analyzed by Liebes on this multivalent paradoxical phrase in *Peraqim*, 145–51, 161–64.

קרדינותא (*Qardinuta*) recalls a phrase in BT *Pesaḥim* 7a: חיטי קורדניתא (*ḥittei qurdanaita*), "wheat from Kurdistan," which, according to Rashi, is very hard. In *Zohar* 1:15a, several witnesses record the variants קדרינותא (*qadrinuta*) or קדרוניתא (*qadrunita*), "darkness." See *ZḤ* 2a, where קדרנותא דסיהרא (*qardenuta de-sihara*) means "eclipse of the moon," corresponding to the Hebrew קדרות הירח (*qadrut ha-yareaḥ*), "darkening of the moon."

On *botsina de-qardinuta*, see *Zohar* 1:15a (and Matt's note with other possible renderings), 18b, 86b; 2:133b, 177a (*SdTs*), 233a, 260a (*Heikh*; below, page 155); 3:48b–49a, 135b (*IR*), 139a (*IR*), 292b (*IZ*), 295a–b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 56d–58d (*QhM*). On the phallic connotations of the phrase, see Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 60–62, and index, s.v. "hardened spark"; Liebes, "Zohar ve-Eros," 73–80.

201. **through whom was consummated the one in need…** The death of the Ten Martyrs impacted upon and rectified divine worlds, just as the elimination of the dross at the beginning of emanation enabled harmony on high.

The phrase "it ascended in thought thus" derives from BT *Menaḥot* 29b, where it is spoken by God in response to Moses' challenge of divine providence after being foreshown Rabbi Akiva's eventual gruesome death at the hand of the Romans: "Silence! So it has arisen in thought before Me!" See *Or Yaqar*.

The "joy" refers to the martyrs' souls as they are gathered unto *Shekhinah*; and "sadness," to the annihilation of their bodies by the Other Side.

The "Four Who Entered the Orchard" and the story of the "Ten Martyrs" are key myths in the *Heikhalot* literature of antiquity. Here they are connected and associated with creation and Messianism.

202. ***So I praised enjoyment*—joy of the Holy King…** The last paragraph concluded with the idea that joy

pertains to the Side of Holiness, and sadness to the Other Side. The *Zohar* briefly interrupts its account of the martyrs with an "aside" on joy, and in doing so "tames" one of the many seemingly heretical statements found in Ecclesiastes. See *Midrash Tehillim* 92:3; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 8:15.

203. **he lends to the blessed Holy One…** The word ילונו (*yilvennu*) can mean "he will accompany him" but also "he will lend him." See BT *Bava Batra* 10a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:2; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 15; BT *Beitsah* 15b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 208. On taking pity on the poor, see *Zohar* 2:250b–251a (*Heikh*; above, page 91).

204. **this is joy, that is sadness… their body in sadness, the soul in joy…** The *Zohar* returns to the motif of the Ten Martyrs. The side of holiness is "joy"; the Other Side, "sadness." Indeed this dualism permeates all being: soul/body, good/evil, etc. On the whole episode as having been revealed and transpiring fittingly, cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§108–111. See also BT *Bava Batra* 10b.

205. **those twelve: four above and eight with them…** The twelve lights emitted by the spirit of the hall. The four above are the four archangels. See *Zohar* 2:254a (*Heikh*; above, p. 112 and n. 180) and 254b (*Heikh*; above, page 114). On their arrangement as corresponding to the banners of the tribes, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:10. The arrangement of four angels, each of whom "takes two," is repeated throughout the various realms below.

206. **whenever kisses unite…** Impelled by love, prayers ascend from the fifth hall of love to the sixth hall through the mystery of the kiss—binding spirit to spirit, attaching to the blessed Holy One, while the prayers (kisses) of the righteous arouse delight on high.

On the verse from Isaiah, see *Zohar* 2:252b (*Heikh*; above, p. 102 and n. 149). See also Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:993; Cf. *Or Yaqar* and *Matoq mi-Devash*, who understand "they hasten [or: precede] that bliss" to mean

that the souls of the righteous in prayer partake in the celestial bliss before the halls.

207. **all of them are comprised within this hall** Extending until the bottom of 2:256a (*Heikh;* below, page 128), the *Zohar* now depicts six halls seemingly within the sixth hall, each with its own set of eight supports, which are termed "Pegs of the Dwelling (or Tabernacle)." The linen hangings that bounded the court of the desert sanctuary were held in place by cords (see Exodus 35:18, 38:31), which were anchored by *pegs of the Dwelling*. Here, the latter term refers to angelic powers. See *Zohar* 2:229a. The precise nature of these six halls is not clear, with some commentators understanding them as the essence or cause of the regular halls themselves, while others view them as the actual lower halls in their ascent to within the sixth hall. Either way, the sixth hall comprises the lower five and contains its own "personal" additional hall, totaling six. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Nitsotsei Orot*.

208. **The first hall…** See *Zohar* 2:245a–246b (*Heikh*). According to the *Sullam*, the spirit referred to here is *Situtriyah*, the chief spirit of the first hall. According to *Matoq mi-Devash*, the spirit refers to *Razi'el*, the chief spirit of the sixth hall. As in a pitched tent, the "pegs" (here angels) are stationed outside the hall, fastening it in place. See *Or Yaqar*.

209. **When the supernal King arrives…** Namely, to effectuate the union of the halls with their respective *sefirot*, thereby inaugurating the sexual union between the male and female potencies within God. As this process begins, the pegs and cords are uprooted, which enables the hall to journey and ascend above—just as the earthly Dwelling would travel, once its pegs and cords were removed.

The final phrase in the paragraph is not clear, and the manuscripts and printed editions vary. I have followed CT1, V23, and Cremona. Either *Raziel* merges with the spirit of the second hall within the sixth hall, or *Situtriyah*, the chief spirit

of the first hall, merges with the spirit of the second hall. See *Or Yaqar* (who notes confusion in the text); *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. According to *Or Yaqar*, who reconstructs the text as "The first spirit within the hall quickly enters and merges with the second spirit within," the fusion of spirits refers to the union of *Situtriyah* with *Adiriyah*, the second spirit in the first hall.

210. ***Qera'i'el… Shema'i'el…*** The first figure's name derives from the root קרע (*qr'*), "to tear"; the latter's, from שמע (*shm'*), "to hear." On *Shema'i'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§178, 718, 790; *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 38 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41); *Zohar* 3:3b; cf. 1:108a (*ST*); *TZ* 70,130a; see Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 195.

In the depiction of the pegs that follows, the pegs of the east and south are presented as one entity, functioning together; likewise for the pegs of the north and west. East corresponds to *Tif'eret*; south to *Ḥesed*; north to *Gevurah*; and west to *Malkhut*.

211. ***Sa'adi'el… Sitreyah'el…*** The former figure's name derives from the root סעד (*s'd*), "to help"; the latter's, from סטר (*str*), "side, aspect." On *Sa'adiel*, see the variant preserved in *Zohar* 2:248a (*Heikh*). See also Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §826. On *Sitiryah'el*, cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §208.

212. **weighing males and females upon scales…** According to the *Zohar*, when souls issue from *Shekhinah*, they are weighed on a cosmic scale; and each pair of male and female souls that balance perfectly become destined for one another. On balancing and matching couples before birth, see JT *Beitsah* 5:2, 63a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:8; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:8; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16; *Bereshit Rabbati*, p. 95; *Zohar* 1:229a; 2:109a. All of the traditional sources cited here quote Psalms 62:10. See also BT *Sotah* 2a: "Forty days before the creation of an embryo, a heavenly voice comes forth and proclaims: the daughter of so-and-so is for so-and-so." On מתקלא (*matqala*), "scale," see

Liebes, *Peraqim*, 329–332; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 70. On *scales of equity* in the fourth hall, see *Zohar* 2:252a (*Heikh*; above, page 100). On male and female souls in the first hall, see *Zohar* 2:246a (*Heikh*; above, page 62).

213. **those who are equivalent… balance and unite as one…** See BT *Sotah* 2a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "A man is paired with a woman only according to his deeds." Even so, sometimes, a union prospers despite the fact that one member of the couple "weighs more," i.e., is more righteous, than the other.

214. ***Petaḥi'el… Atari'el…*** The former figure's name derives from the root פתח (*ptḥ*), "to open"; the latter's, from עטרה (*atarah*), "crown." On *Petaḥi'el*, see *Midrash Adonai Yasad Arets* in Eisenstein (ed.), *Otsar Midrashim*, 106. Cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §831. On *Atari'el*, see Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 160.

215. ***Pedati'el… Tumyah'el…*** The former figure's name apparently derives from פדות (*pedut*), "redemption"; the latter's, apparently from the root תמם (*tmm*), "simple, complete."

216. **shed tears over all those who divorce their first wife…** They weep not only for the failed marriage and union, but also because they (mistakenly) believe that the departure of the seven blessings from the woman indicates the departure of the blessings and influence of the higher *sefirot* upon *Shekhinah* ("another place"). The divine voice reassures them: *Shekhinah* (*your mother*) has not been divorced.

See BT *Gittin* 90b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "For whoever divorces his first wife, even the altar sheds tears." See also BT *Sanhedrin* 22a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34, and Luria's note 21; *Zohar* 2:102b–103a.

Seven blessings are traditionally recited under the wedding canopy. According to the *Zohar*, these seven blessings are inherited by the woman from the sevenfold abundance of *Shekhinah* (who is the consummation of the

seven lower *sefirot*). See 2:102b, 169a–b; 3:6a, 44b, 124a, 266b; *ZḤ* 88d–89a (*MhN, Rut*). BT *Ketubbot* 7b–8a records six wedding blessings, to which is added the blessing over wine. See *Kallah Rabbati* 1:1.

On the verse from Isaiah, see *Zohar* 3:75a, 268a. See also 2:216b on *Shekhinah* as not being divorced.

Note that of the pegs of the first hall within the sixth hall, two groups of angels pertain to coupling, and two for lamenting divorce.

217. **The second hall…** See *Zohar* 2:246b–248a (*Heikh*).

218. ***Yahadani'el… Gezuryah… Ahari'el… Barahi'el…*** Aside from *Gezuryah*, whose name derives from the root גזר (*gzr*), "to cut, decree," the names are obscure. See *Or Yaqar*. On *Ahari'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §99.

219. **women's groans…** On the groans of childbirth, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:7; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:6; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34; *Zohar* 2:211a–b. On the danger of childbirth, see M *Shabbat* 2:6.

On the Other Side accusing at a time of danger, see *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 23:10: "Satan accuses only in a time of danger." See also JT *Shabbat* 2:6, 5b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 91:9; *Zohar* 1:174b.

220. ***Ḥalḥali'el… Qersafyah'el… Sogadyah… Gedaryah…*** The name *Ḥalḥali'el* may derive from the root חלחל (*ḥlḥl*), meaning "to shudder, tremble," but also "perforate." *Qersafyah'el* is entirely obscure. *Sogadyah* may derive from the root סגד (*sgd*), "to worship, bow." *Sogadyah* is attested in O17, *Or Yaqar*, and Mantua. Other witnesses preserve the reading *Sangryah*. On *Gedaryah*, whose name is based on the word גדר (*gader*), "fence, wall," see *Zohar* 2:202a; cf. 1:41a (*Heikh*). See also Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §630. See *Or Yaqar*.

221. **the blessed Holy One gazes upon that blood…** On the blood of circumcision as assuaging judgment, see *Zohar* 3:14a. See also M *Nedarim* 3:11, and BT *Shabbat*

137b: “Were it not for the blood of the covenant [of circumcision], heaven and earth would not endure.”

222. **Sabbath—holy kingdom—has spread over him…** By the eighth day, the child has passed through one Sabbath, correlated with *Malkhut*, who now protects him.

On circumcision after one Sabbath, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:10: “[*When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born,*] *it shall be seven days under its mother;* [*and from the eighth day on, it shall be acceptable as a fire offering to YHVH*] (Leviticus 22:27). Rabbi Yehoshu’a of Sikhnin said in the name of Rabbi Levi, ‘[This can be compared to] a king who entered a province and issued a decree, saying, “Let no visitors here attend upon me until they shall have first attended upon the queen!” So, too, the blessed Holy One said to Israel, “My children, you shall not bring an offering to Me until a Sabbath day [the queen of days] shall have passed over it.” For there cannot be a period of seven days without a Sabbath, just as there is no circumcision without a Sabbath.’” See also *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:10; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 17; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli’ezer* 20, p. 370; *Zohar* 3:44a (*Piq*), 91b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 228; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 132.

By providing a portion to the Other Side, one ensures that the demonic force will be occupied, assuaged, and deterred from interfering in the realm of holiness. On this theme, see *Sifra, Shemini, millu’im* 1:3, 43c; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 46; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 158–59; *Zohar* 1:11a, 64a–65a, 89b (*ST*), 113b–114b, 138b, 145b, 174b, 190a, 210b, 247b; 2:33a, 111b, 130a, 141a, 152b, 154b, 157a–b, 169a, 181b, 184b–185a, 203b, 227a–b, 237b–239b, 242b, 262a–b (*Heikh*), 266b (*Heikh*), 269a, 271b (*Piq*); 3:60b, 63a–64a, 63a–b (*Piq*), 79b, 101b–102a, 202b–203a, 224a–b, 258b–259a; *ZḤ* 20c, 46c, 86b–c (*MhN, Rut*), 87b–c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 165–67; idem, *Sefer ha-*

Mishqal, 124–27; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:453–54, 3:890–95, 959.

223. **Third hall…** See *Zohar* 2:248a–251a (*Heikh*).

224. ***Yehodyah… Azri'el… Shekhani'el… Azuzyah…*** *Yehodyah* begins with the first three letters of the tetragrammaton. On *Azri'el*, whose name means "God is my help," see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§222, 372, 494, 501, 504, 582; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:202a, 247b (*Heikh*), 248b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*), 90c (*MhN, Rut*); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 266 (131). On *Shekhani'el*, whose name derives from the root שכן (*shkhn*), "to dwell," see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*). See also Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §210. *Azuzyah* apparently derives from the root עזז (*ʿzz*), "to be strong, strengthen."

225. **breath of children studying Torah…** See BT *Shabbat* 119b, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah the Prince: "The world endures only for the sake of the breath of children in the house of study." See *Zohar* 1:1b, 47a, 146b (*ST*); 2:39a; 3:17b; *ZḤ* 7a (*MhN*). See also the reference to tender schoolchildren in *Zohar* 1:38b (*Heikh*) in the description of the third hall.

226. ***Azafi'el… Qetatreyah'el… Asasanyah… Adiriryah…*** The names are obscure. See *Or Yaqar*. On *Adiriryah*, cf. *Adiryah* in the first hall in *Zohar* 2:246a (*Heikh*). *Azafi'el* and *Qetatreyah'el* are attested in Mantua and *Or Yaqar*. The witnesses contain varied, though similar, options. On *Azafi'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§208, 581.

227. **withdraw their children from Torah…** See [Moses de León?], *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, 61. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 119b; *Zohar* 3:39b.

228. **Fourth hall…** See *Zohar* 2:251a–253a (*Heikh*). On *Ḥasdiyah'el*, whose name contains the word חסד (*ḥesed*), "love, kindness," cf. חסדיאל (*Ḥasdi'el*) in *Zohar* 1:149b (*ST*); 3:154b; *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 402. On *Qedumyah*, see *Zohar* 2:252b (*Heikh*). On *Dahari'el*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, § 207; *Zohar* 2:252a

(*Heikh*). *Qasiryah* seems to be otherwise unattested. See *Or Yaqar*.

Presumably the number thirty-two alludes to the thirty-two paths of wisdom mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1. The significance of the number 500,000 is not apparent, though according to *Matoq mi-Devash* it alludes to the fifty gates of understanding mentioned in BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b.

229. **judgments not yet handed down as written decrees…** As long as the judgment has not been officially recorded, there is still hope. Cf. *Zohar* 2:248a (*Heikh*; above, pages 77–78). Apparently the sense here is that these four supreme pegs have the capacity to ameliorate the judgment—hence, "for the life of the world." See *Or Yaqar*.

The verse from Daniel continues: *so that all creatures may know that the Most High is sovereign over the realm of man*. "Watchers" and "holy ones" designate angels. See *Zohar* 2:6a, where the verse from Daniel is cited in the context of the Hall of Merit, the fourth hall.

230. **set aside fixed times for Torah…** See M *Avot* 1:15; BT *Shabbat* 31a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Talmud Torah* 1:8: "Every Jewish man… must establish a fixed time for Torah study during the day and night, as is said: *You shall meditate on it day and night* (Joshua 1:8)"; idem, 3:7; *Zohar* 1:127b (*MhN*). See also M *Avot* 2:4, in the name of Hillel: "Do not say 'When I have time, I shall study,' lest you will never have time."

231. **Fifth hall…** See *Zohar* 2:253a–b (*Heikh*). On *Qadami'el*, derived from the root קדם (*qdm*), "before, early, east," see *Zohar* 1:149b (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). On the names of the other angels, see *Or Yaqar*.

232. **soul added every Sabbath eve…** See BT *Beitsah* 16a: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish said, 'On Sabbath eve, the blessed Holy One imparts an extra soul to a human being. When Sabbath departs, it is taken from him.'" See *Zohar* 1:48a; 2:88b, 98a, 135b, 136b, 204a–205b; 3:173a,

288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 17a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 111, 114; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1230–33; Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, 121–36. On jesters, cf. *Zohar* 1:148b; 2:107b; Liebes, "Zohar ve-Eros," 82.

233. **remove judgment… from those tormented in Hell…** That they might rest on the Sabbath. On relief from the torments of Hell on the Sabbath, see *Zohar* 2:252b (*Heikh*; above, p. 101 and n. 147). According to *Or Yaqar*, "joy" signifies the *sefirah Binah*, the source of the pegs.

234. **Sixth hall…** Apparently indicating an additional hall within the "actual" sixth hall. Just as the actual sixth hall sits above and incorporates the lower halls, so too the additional hall within the sixth hall lies above the lower five "minor" halls.

235. ***Malki'el… Shemayah'el… Mesasranyah… Tsaftsafyah…*** On *Malki'el* (or *Milki'el*), see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 40 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:42); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§494, 505, 581, 598, 720, 773; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:246a (*Heikh*), 248a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*); *TZ* 70, 129b; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 135–36. *Malki'el* contains the root מלכ (*mlkh*), "rule, royalty, majesty"; *Shemayah'el* contains the root שמע (*shm'*), "to hear, heed." *Mesasranyah* is entirely obscure. On *Tsaftsafyah*, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§76, 387. On all these names, see *Or Yaqar*.

236. **that his soul will depart with a kiss…** On death by divine kiss, see *Zohar* 2:253b (*Heikh*; above, p. 111 and n. 177). See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:834.

"With great difficulty" renders כפיטורי (*ke-fiturei*), an ambiguous word deriving from an ambiguous phrase in BT *Berakhot* 8a, where כפיטורי בפי ושת (*ke-fiturei be-fi veset*), "like the gushing water at the entrance of a canal," describes death by diphtheria. Some understand the phrase to denote ropes being pulled through loop-holes in the boards of a ship. See Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *ke-fiturei be-fi veset*. Whatever the precise meaning, the phrase describes the pangs of a painful death. In the Talmudic passage, such painful death is contrasted with death by divine kiss. See Jastrow, 1161. See also BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 28b–29a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Miqqets* 15. See also *Zohar* 2:267a (*Heikh*; below, page 202) in the description of the sixth hall of impurity.

237. **all mysteries and all higher and lower rungs begin to unite…** Having enumerated the details of all the "minor" or "archetypal" halls within the sixth hall, the *Zohar* resumes its discussion of the "actual" sixth hall, where the process of the unification of the realm of the halls

and the *sefirot* begins. When the halls and *sefirot* are united, the light of *Ein Sof* (the one that flows, not known, unrevealed) streams through all the tiers of being. See *Zohar* 1:44b–45a (*Heikh*).

238. ***Behold, My servants shall eat…*** On the verse from Isaiah, see BT *Semaḥot* 2:1; *Shabbat* 153a; *Shemot Rabbah* 25:7; *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 13; *Zohar* 3:239b. Here, eating signifies bathing in and ingesting the divine flow.

239. **Jacob—nexus of all faith…** Jacob—signifying *Tif'eret*, the central *sefirah*—initiates the unification of the halls with the *sefirot*, by joining with the sixth hall through the mystery of kisses, uniting spirit with spirit. Jacob receives the spirit below, namely the spirit of the sixth hall, and is thereby prepared to receive the "supreme spirit," here connoting *Binah*.

On the verse from the Song of Songs, see *Zohar* 2:254a (*Heikh*; above, p. 111 and n. 177). See also 1:44b–45a (*Heikh*). Here the verse seems to be understood as spoken by the spirit of the sixth hall to *Tif'eret*. For various interpretations of this passage, see *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

240. **other limbs arouse…** First Jacob unites with the spirit of the sixth hall, followed by the other *sefirot* and their respective halls.

"Limb" renders שייפא (*shaipha*)—a frequent Zoharic neologism that may be based playfully on the Talmudic line (BT *Sotah* 7b): על איבריה לשפא (*al eivreih la-shappa*), "His arm [or: limb] entered the casket." Or, the Zoharic sense of *shaipha* may derive from BT *Ḥullin* 42b: "This joint of the thighbone דשף (*de-shaph*), that slipped [i.e., was dislocated], from its place [i.e., out of its socket]." Note also the expression in Job 33:21: ושפו עצמותיו (*Ve-shuppu atsmotav*), *And his bones are rubbed away*. See *Arukh*, s.v. *shaph*; Rashi, *Sotah* 7b, s.v. *la-shappa*; idem on Job 33:21, citing *Ḥullin* 42b; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 227; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian*

Aramaic, s.v. *shappa, shphph*. On limbs uniting with limbs, see also *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*); 2:259a (*Heikh*).

241. **Lower limbs always arouse toward upper…** A general principle of Kabbalah: through arousal below there is arousal above, and so the process of unification begins with the halls—"lower limbs." See *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 35b, 265a (*Heikh*); 3:31b, 40b, 47b, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144.

On the "black flame," signifying *Malkhut* (who has no light of Her own), arousing to the "white flame," signifying *Tif'eret*, see *Zohar* 1:51a, 77b, 83b.

In the verse from Psalms, *Elohim*, one of the names of *Malkhut*, is urged to keep singing and thereby arouse the white light of *Tif'eret* to unite with Her. See *Zohar* 1:77b, 86a, 178b; 2:140a; 3:219a; *ZḤ* 85b (*MhN, Rut*).

242. **then all is called by the complete name…** When all the halls are united with their respective *sefirot*, the complete name *YHVH Elohim* pertains. When Jacob (*Tif'eret*) unites with the sixth hall, the name ויהוה (*va-YHVH*), "And *YHVH*," pertains. See next paragraph. The radiance "from beyond" alludes to *Binah*. On the distinction between the aforementioned two divine names, cf. *Zohar* 2:213a.

In rabbinic literature, the divine names *YHVH* and *Elohim* represent, respectively, the divine qualities of compassion and justice. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; and 13:3, where *YHVH Elohim* is called "a complete name." See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:258b (*Heikh*), 262a (*Heikh*). See also 1:4a, 20a, 48b, 49a; 2:113b, 161a, 229a, 260a (*Heikh*); 3:138b (*IR*), 296a (*IZ*).

On the significance of ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), "And *YHVH*," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Wherever it is said *And YHVH*, this implies: He and His court." Here, "And *YHVH*" designates the union of the *sefirah Tif'eret* with the sixth hall. The letter ו (*vav*) has the numerical value of six, while *YHVH* signifies *Tif'eret*. Alternatively, in light

of what follows, the letter *vav* signifies Jacob (*Tif'eret*) and the name *YHVH* signifies the sixth hall, now united with *Tif'eret*. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 16; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:4; Rashi on Exodus 12:29; *Zohar* 1:15b, 64b, 105a, 107b, 159b, 192b, 198a, 240a; 2:37b, 46a, 149a, 227b; 3:9b, 149a. The hermeneutical significance of *vav* as the prefixed particle *va-* ("and") was championed by Rabbi Akiva. See BT *Yevamot* 68b, *Sanhedrin* 51b.

243. **Jacob took four wives...** Rachel, Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah. Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, Jacob's marriage to two sisters (Leah and Rachel, in an act later explicitly forbidden in Leviticus 18:18) is explained as reflecting *Tif'eret*'s position between two worlds, namely *Binah* and *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 1:153b; 2:126b; Moses de León, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 40–41. Here, the four wives are the four archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel placed within the sixth hall. "And *YHVH*" thus indicates Jacob (symbolized by the letter *vav*) and the four wives or angels (symbolized by the four letters of the divine name). On the four archangels in this hall, see *Zohar* 2:254a–b (*Heikh*; above, page 112). On the four riverheads as four angels, see *Zohar* 2:15b (*MhN*), 211b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 293 (138). On Jacob's taking four wives, see also *Zohar* 1:133b, 236a–b.

Just as the union of *Tif'eret* with the sixth hall generates the name "And *YHVH*," so the union of the *sefirah Gevurah* (Isaac) with the fourth hall (Merit) generates the name "And *YHVH*." Whereas the former is favorable and indicates providence and compassion, the latter indicates punishment. On Genesis 19:24, see *Zohar* 1:64b.

244. **רצון שלים (*Ratson Shalim*), Consummate Desire... עת רצון (*et ratson*), a time of favor...** *Ratson* (the name of the sixth hall) means "desire, favor, goodwill." When Jacob (*Tif'eret*) unites with the sixth hall, the long-awaited union of the *sefirot* and the halls begins—enabling "a time of favor,"

which apparently refers to the union of "time" (*Shekhinah*) with "favor" (*Tif'eret*, extending on to *Keter*, also known as *ratson*). See *Zohar* 2:253b (*Heikh*; above, p. 110 and n. 174). See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The significance of the mnemonic from Esther is not entirely apparent, and many printed editions of the *Zohar* either drop the passage or place it in parentheses. It is, however, found in the earliest editions and the manuscripts. According to *Or Yaqar*, the verse illustrates the union of the halls—pictured as maidens like Esther—with the *sefirot*.

The phrase "And even though we have learned south-east, it is all one" apparently means: even though we usually understand the divine flow as streaming from *Ḥesed* in the south through *Tif'eret* in the east, here we are adopting a slightly different view, since here the union and flow begin with the joining of spirit and spirit—as initiated by *Tif'eret* and the sixth hall—generating in turn the union of the other *sefirot* with their respective halls. See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*. Cf. *Matoq mi-Devash*.

See M *Zevaḥim* 5:3, describing how the priest should sprinkle the blood of the purification offering upon the altar: "The blood needed to be applied in four sprinklings. How? He went up the ramp [of the altar], proceeded around the circuit, and came to the southeast horn [or: corner], then the northeast, the northwest, the southwest." See *Zohar* 3:120a.

245. **Abraham… called Great Love… takes the hall called Love…** The unification of the *sefirot* and halls continues, as *Ḥesed*, symbolized by Abraham, unites with its hall, the Hall of Love. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*). On *Ḥesed* as Great Love, see *Zohar* 2:254b (*Heikh*; above, page 115).

On the breasts of the fifth hall and the name *El Shaddai*, see *Zohar* 2:253a (*Heikh*; above, page 107). Here, the breasts of the hall are filled from within Love Supreme, indicating the *sefirah Ḥesed*. Hence: *El Shaddai*, the union of *El*, signifying *Ḥesed*, with *Shaddai*, the breasts of the fifth hall.

According to a midrashic interpretation, the name *Shaddai* alludes to God's original command to limit the expansion of the universe. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "I am the one ש (*she*), who, said to the world: 'די (*dai*), Enough!'" On the midrashic interpretation of *Shaddai* as "enough, ample, sufficient," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:8; *Tanḥuma, Ḥayyei Sarah* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 11; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3; *Zohar* 3:11b, 119b, 251b, 258a (*RM*).

On the world as enduring through Abraham, cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:9; *Zohar* 1:3b.

246. ***abundance of her glory…*** Rendering זיז כבודה (*ziz kevodah*). The phrase might also be rendered *flow of her glory* or *heavy teat*, i.e., a flowing full breast.

In its simple sense, the verse from Genesis means: *Who would have uttered to Abraham: Sarah will suckle children*? Here, the verse is read as describing the eschatological flow of emanation from Who (*Binah*) to *Abraham* (*Ḥesed*), which in turn enables *Sarah* (*Malkhut*) to nourish those below (*children*).

On the motif of suckling in the *Zohar*, see Haskell, *Suckling at My Mother's Breasts*.

247. **Isaac… takes and embraces that hall called Merit…** The unification of the *sefirot* and halls continues, as *Gevurah*—upper judgment, symbolized by Isaac—unites with its hall, the Hall of Merit. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*).

248. ***Yes, there are* אלהים שפטים (*elohim shofetim*), *gods judging, on earth…*** The verse from Psalms is often construed to mean *there is, indeed, divine justice on earth*, though the wording is odd (from a strictly monotheistic perspective): the noun *elohim* is matched by a plural participle. Here, the anomalous plural is interpreted as pointing to multiple significations of the word *elohim: Elohim Ḥayyim*, Living God, implying *Binah; Elohim* that is Higher Court, implying *Gevurah*; and *Elohim* that is Lower Court, implying *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 1:17b–18a.

249. **Why are they called עירין (*irin*)?...** The word עיר (*ir*), "city," signifies *Malkhut* specifically, as well as the halls in general. The term עירין (*irin*) refers to the angelic watchers mentioned in Daniel (here correlated with the seventy-two lights of the fourth hall), which are so named since they derive their power from *Malkhut*.

On the seventy-two lights in the fourth hall, corresponding to the Sanhedrin, see *Zohar* 2:251a (*Heikh*; above, page 95).

On the verse from Daniel, see *Zohar* 2:6a (also in the context of the Hall of Merit); 3:295b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (also mentioning the Hall of Merit).

250. **left included in right, right ruling over left...** A cardinal principle of the *Zohar*: *Gevurah* (also known as *Din*) is incorporated within—and thereby ameliorated by—*Ḥesed*. The inclusion of the powers of judgment within the powers of love is exemplified by the binding of Isaac (signifying *Gevurah*) by Abraham (signifying *Ḥesed*). Through discovering God and expressing love, Abraham had attained the rung of *Ḥesed* ("Love"), but he was devoid of its complementary opposite: *Din* ("Judgment"). Being too one-sided, he had to balance love with rigor in order to round out his personality and become a complete human being in the image of God—hence the command to bind Isaac. Had Isaac (associated with the quality of judgment) been so commanded, harsh judgment would have prevailed.

See *Zohar* 1:119b, 230b; 3:18a; Moses de León, *Sod Eser Sefirot*, 372. See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 55:1. On Abraham and *Ḥesed*, see Micah 7:20; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:3; *Bahir* 92 (135), 131–32 (190–91); *Zohar* 1:7b, 80a, 83a–84a, 96a, 97b (*ST*), 111a–b; 2:36a; 3:14a.

On the right containing the left, see *Zohar* 1:17a, 119b, 243a; 2:26b, 52b, 57a–b, 66a, 81a, 162b, 168b–169a, 223a, 231a; 3:17b–18a, 24a, 118b, 176a, 236b; *ZḤ* 44a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; Wolfson, "Left Contained in the Right."

251. **judgment by merit…** Literally, “judgment in (or with) merit,” i.e., Isaac signifying the *sefirah Din* in the fourth hall called Merit. The judgment emanating from the fourth hall in conjunction with *Din* is not strict judgment but “judgment with merit,” implying lenient judgment—judgment linked with merit, in turn linked with the fifth hall of *Ḥesed*, “Love.” “Merit” renders זכותא (*zekhuta*), though “innocence, favor” are also implied. The union of judgment with merit parallels the union of male and female within divinity.

See *Avot* 1:6: “Judge every person in the scale of merit [i.e., favorably].” See below, note 254. On perfection of judgment entailing compassion (or leniency) and strict judgment, cf. *Zohar* 3:85b. See *Matoq mi-Devash* for a different interpretation.

252. ***evil’s mouth is stopped…*** The verse from Job is incorporated into the *Amidah* prayer of the Rosh Hashanah liturgy. The union of judgment with merit prevents the Accuser from denouncing. On the mystical significance of the shofar, see *Zohar* 2:250b (*Heikh*; above, p. 92 and n. 120).

253. **forbidden… in the judiciaries of the nations…** See BT *Gittin* 88b; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 3; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Sanhedrin* 26:7.

“Judgment by merit”—lenient judgment—is Israel’s domain; “judgment without merit”—strict judgment—pertains to the Other Side and the nations. Moreover, such a separation of judgment from merit impairs the divine realm.

The context in Psalms (147:19–20) reads: *He tells His words to Jacob, His statutes and laws to Israel. He has not done so for any other nation, and the laws they know not. Hallelujah*.

254. **they are required to open with merit…** On opening with merits first, see M *Sanhedrin* 4:1; BT *Shabbat* 119a; *Qiddushin* 76b; *Sanhedrin* 43a. See *Zohar* 2:6a. On

the requirement to begin adjudicating capital cases with the youngest member of the Sanhedrin (lest he be swayed by his senior colleagues), see M *Sanhedrin* 4:2; BT *Sanhedrin* 32a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayeshev* 17; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (mentioning both opening with merit and beginning with the youngest member).

On the union of Isaac and Rebekah, see *Zohar* 1:136a, 137a, where this union is understood as enacting the union of *Gevurah* with *Shekhinah*. Here, the union signifies the union of *Gevurah* with the fourth hall—though as becomes clear below, all the halls are associated with *Shekhinah*.

The Sanhedrin below are "called [or: summoned, invested] from the place of merit" insofar as they reflect the celestial Sanhedrin located in the fourth hall. See *Zohar* 2:251a (*Heikh*; above, page 95).

255. **judgment by guilt** The opposite of judgment "by merit," and associated with the Other Side. If judgment (*Gevurah*, also known as *Din*) lacks the lenient touch of merit (the fourth hall on the side of holiness), it combines with guilt (the fourth of the halls of impurity), empowering the demonic forces. On the Hall of Guilt, see *Zohar* 2:265a–b (*Heikh*).

256. **the four death penalties…** According to M *Sanhedrin* 7:1, there are four types of capital punishment: stoning, burning, beheading, and strangulation. See next paragraph and next note. When judgment is not united with merit, the Other Side seeks to accuse and sentence people to death.

The four terms "peace and truth, love and compassion" are the converse of the four death penalties. The first pairing "peace and truth" appears in 2 Kings 20:19; Isaiah 39:8; Jeremiah 33:6; Esther 9:30. The second pairing "love and compassion" appears in Psalms 103:4; Zechariah 7:9.

257. **dominion of evil accusation…** The four death penalties are the modus operandi of the Other Side. On the

four death penalties, see also *Zohar* 1:11b; 3:27b (*RM*), 274b (*RM*); *TZ* 21, 59b.

On Isaiah 8:14, see *Zohar* 1:151b (*ST*); 2:249b (*Heikh*). According to BT *Sukkah* 52a, “stone” and “stumbling block” are names of the evil impulse. See *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*).

The phrase from Deuteronomy 32:42 reads: *My sword devours flesh*. The Other Side (known as *end of all flesh*) dominates flesh but not the soul. See *Zohar* 2:254b (*Heikh*; above, page 117). See also 1:65a, 152b; 2:269a; 3:170a, 172b; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 58b. On *end of all flesh* as signifying the demonic realm, see also *Zohar* 1:35b, 54a, 58a, 62b, 148a (*ST*).

The passage from Deuteronomy 21:23 concerns one who is executed for a capital offense, after which his body is hung and exposed. The verse reads in full: *You shall not leave his corpse on the tree overnight, rather you shall surely bury him on that day, for a hanged body is God’s curse* [or: *an offense to God*], *and you shall not defile the land that* YHVH *your God is giving you as an inheritance*. On the meaning of *God’s curse*, see Tigay, *Deuteronomy*; and Alter, *Five Books of Moses*, ad loc. Here, *God’s curse* signifies the Other Side, in charge of strangulation—by means of which the soul departs, leaving only the body, which is the domain of demonic forces. See *Zohar* 1:170a; 2:141a. On crucifying and strangling, see 2:243a. See also *Targum*, Ruth 1:17.

“Dark” (or “black”) bile is one of the four humors of Hippocratic medicine. The term also connotes “melancholy.” Here it is a name for the demonic realm. See *Zohar* 3:227b (*RM*).

The concluding phrase “one for good, the other for ill” refers to the Side of Holiness and the Other Side respectively.

258. ***Your people, all of them righteous…*** The verse from Isaiah is cited in M *Sanhedrin* 10:1 to demonstrate that “all of Israel have a share in the world that is coming.”

259. **The prophets, supernal sides, two thighs…** The unification of the *sefirot* and halls continues, as *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, symbolized by the prophets and the two thighs of the divine body, unite with their respective halls, the hall of Brilliance and the hall of Radiance. Here, however, the *Zohar* treats these two halls as one—the hall of Radiance being comprised within the hall of Brilliance. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*). On the spirit Brilliance, see 1:42b (*Heikh*); 2:249a (*Heikh*; above, page 83); on Radiance, see 1:42a (*Heikh*); 2:247a (*Heikh*; above, page 69).

Just as *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* support *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Written Torah, so their corresponding halls below support *Malkhut*, symbolized by Oral Torah. The halls above are called Oral Torah—a name usually reserved for *Malkhut*—since they constitute Her foundation.

In the *Zohar,* *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are understood as the source of prophecy; and when their halls below unite with them, a mode of minor prophecy—termed "vision"—is enabled. Full prophecy derives from these *sefirot*; vision, from the halls. See *Zohar* 2:247b–248a (*Heikh*; above, pp. 75–77 and nn. 60–64), according to which vision and dream derive from the halls not connected to the *sefirot* above. According to *Or Yaqar*, prophecy ensues when the union is of the *sefirot* with the halls, whereas vision ensues when the union is of the halls with the *sefirot*.

260. **צבאות (*Tseva'ot*), Hosts, reigns over this site…** The *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Hod* and their respective halls resemble one another. The divine name *Tseva'ot* applies when *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* unite and illuminate their halls below. The name also applies to the halls. See *Zohar* 2:261b (*Heikh*; below, page 167). The holy hosts—the celestial powers in charge of vision, derived in turn from *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*—are found in these halls. On *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* as *Tseva'ot*, see *Zohar* 3:11a–b, 61a, 269b; 296a (*IZ*).

261. ***baraita* is external to Mishnah…** Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, the name *Tseva'ot* applies to *Yesod*, the divine phallus

(and site of the covenant of circumcision), where the divine flow is gathered, prepared, and then channeled into *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 1:21b; 2:232a, 258b (*Heikh*); 3:296a (*IZ*). Here, however, *Tseva'ot* applies to *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, the divine thighs, situated outside the sefirotic torso—and by extension, to their respective halls located outside the sefirotic realm, termed *baraitot*, "externals."

A ברייתא (*baraita*), literally "external," is a Tannaitic tradition not included in the canonical Mishnah. Whereas the halls of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are symbolized by *baraita, Malkhut* is symbolized by Mishnah. And just as *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are the thighs outside the body—and their halls exist outside the sefirotic realm—*baraitot* are the outer chambers of the Mishnah. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; cf. *Sullam*.

On *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* being outside or beneath the trunk of the body, see *Zohar* 1:21b, 146a, 166a; 2:110b, 227a; 3:58a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 337; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 11 (13–14). On *baraita* and Mishnah, see *Zohar* 2:261b (*Heikh*; below, page 167); *ZḤ* 64a (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1088.

On outer chambers, cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 5b, 12b–13a; *Zohar* 1:248b; 2:18a (*MhN*); 3:15b.

262. ***I would bring you to the house of my mother…*** The verse from the Song of Songs is understood as being spoken by Israel to *Tif'eret*, the male aspect of divinity, describing Israel's desire to bring *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut* together in sexual union, so that Israel below might then enjoy the flow of emanation from *Malkhut*. When *Tif'eret* is in the Holy of Holies, i.e., united with *Malkhut*, the flowing river of *Yesod* can pour forth upon them—*she would teach me*.

The *tanna'im* are the rabbinic authorities cited in the Mishnah or belonging to the Mishnaic period (first two centuries of the Common Era). Their rung thus corresponds to *Malkhut*. *Malkhut* is called Mishnah (the Oral Torah), also meaning "copy, second," since She is second to *Tif'eret*, the Written Torah. The divine flow streams out of *Malkhut* below

to the halls, called *baraita*, "external," located outside the sefirotic realm.

In the *Heikhalot* sections of the *Zohar*, the Holy of Holies denotes the seventh hall, which is associated with *Binah* but—as will become clearer below—that hall is actually equivalent to *Malkhut*. On the Chamber of the Holy of Holies as signifying *Malkhut*, see *Zohar* 1:229a–b. See also 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:258b (*Heikh*; below, page 146).

263. **Woe if it is revealed, woe if it is not revealed...** On the tension between revealing and concealing, see BT *Bava Batra* 89b, where Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Zakkai says, concerning the details of illegal practices, "Woe is me if I say it! Woe is me if I do not say it! If I say it, the deceivers will learn. If I do not say it, the deceivers will say, 'Scholars are not expert in our practices.'"

See M *Kelim* 17:16; *Tosefta Kelim* (*Bava Metsi'a*) 7:9; *Zohar* 1:11b; 2:95a, 123b; 3:74b, 127b (*IR*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1086–88. See, as well, *Zohar* 2:100b: "Now what should I do? If I speak—this hidden mystery must not be revealed. If I do not speak, these worthy ones will be left orphaned of this mystery." See also 2:203a, 234a.

264. **The First Temple...** The First Temple, destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E., corresponded to *Binah* (see *Zohar* 1:39b [*Heikh*]; 2:9b; cf. the additions at the end of the seventh hall of holiness, below, page 175). Throughout the First Temple period, "sun" and "moon," *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*, enjoyed total sexual union—mediated by "all," *Yesod*, the divine phallus. The destruction of the Temple signified the termination of this union (mysteries were withdrawn, the divine flow no longer reaching *Malkhut*), which brought about the exile of *Malkhut*—as well as the exile of Israel, who were cast to "the thighs," the halls beneath the sefirotic realm. Hence, Israel fell from Mishnah to *baraita*.

265. **Throughout the Second Temple…** Following the Cyrus proclamation (see 2 Chronicles 36:22–23), the people of Israel were permitted to return to the land and rebuild the Temple, thus inaugurating the period of the Second Temple, which stood until its destruction by the Romans in 70 C.E. The majority of the people, however, chose to remain in exile. Only a few returned, thereby attaining the rung of Mishnah, enjoying proximity with *Malkhut*.

On Israel's failure to return en masse from Babylon, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:8–9. See also *Zohar* 2:9b. On the Second Temple as correlated with *Malkhut* (Second House), see 1:39b (*Heikh*); 2:9b.

266. **the dominion of this Second House withdrew…** Even as the Second Temple stood, the peoples' sins diminished *Malkhut*'s power and She was harassed by "Foreskin"—symbolizing the Other Side (the demonic counterpart of *Yesod*), but also alluding to the Greek decrees against circumcision in the days of the Maccabees in the second century B.C.E. The Maccabees, who defended the Jews against the Greeks and purified the Temple, were priests.

On "foreskin" as referring to the demonic realm (sometimes alluding to Christianity), see *Zohar* 2:244b, 266a–b (*Heikh*; below, pages 195 and 197). See also 1:13a, 18a, 35b, 91b, 103b; 3:44a–b (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (68); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 13a.

On the inferiority of the Second Temple to the First Temple, see JT *Ta'anit* 2:1, 65a; BT *Yoma* 9b, 21b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:8; *Zohar* 2:9b, 179b.

On the phrase "the King who possesses peace," see *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im*, 15, 44c; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:2, 3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:1 and 1:2; *Zohar* 1:5b, 29a, 184a, 226b, 248b; 2:14a (*MhN*), 127b, 132a–b, 143b–144b; 3:10b, 20a, 60a, 73b; *ZḤ* 15d, 22a, 25c, (all *MhN*); *ZḤ* 60d (*ShS, MhN*).

267. **descended from there to the curves of the thighs…** Following the destruction of the Second Temple, the people Israel was cast out of the Land (from *Malkhut*) and descended to the level of the halls below—"thighs" and eventually "feet" (perhaps implying the outer limits of divine power, or the border between the holy and the demonic). As the verse from Zechariah promises, however, the "feet" will rise and the world will be perfected. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash* for various interpretations.

On the "curves" of the thighs, see Song of Songs 7:2: *The curves of your thighs like ornaments*, cited in *Zohar* 1:42a, 45a (both *Heikh*); 2:247a (*Heikh*; above, page 69).

The verse from Zechariah derives from his eschatological vision of the Day of the Lord. See Zechariah 14. On the verse, cf. *Zohar* 3:143a (*IR*).

268. **Whoever knows and appraises with the gauge of the measuring line…** More literally: "Whoever knows and measures בשיעורא (*be-shi'ura*), with the measure, of the measuring line." Israel's exilic situation is marked by their descent from "thighs" to "feet." Hence, one who knows the length of the משיכו (*meshikhu*), "flow, continuum, extent," of the divine thighs to the feet knows the secrets of redemption—the משיכא (*meshikha*), "duration," of the exile, which is אתמשך (*itmeshakh*), "prolonged." The Aramaic words *meshikhu* and *meshikha* recall the Hebrew word משיח (*mashiaḥ*), "messiah." See Ḥayyim Vital, *Sha'ar Ma'amrei Rashbi*, ad loc.; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The term קו המדה (*qav ha-middah*), *the measuring line*, appears in Jeremiah 31:39, in a description of the future rebuilding of Jerusalem. Cf. Job 38:5. Here, "measuring line" refers to a divine tool by which the stages of emanation are mapped out. On the measuring line, see *Zohar* 1:18b; 2:233a; *ZḤ* 31c, 33a–d, 56d–58d (the section called *Qav ha-Middah*), 86a (*MhN, Rut*); *TZ* 18, 37b. See also *Zohar* 1:15a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:271–72.

Cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §952: "Whoever knows this שיעור (*shi'ur*), measure, of our Creator…, concealed from creatures, is assured of life in the world that is coming." See *Or Yaqar*, according to whom "the continuum of the rungs of the halls constitutes the mystery of the measure of the stature of the Female."

"The Reapers of the Field" are those who harvest secrets of Torah, which can be pictured as sprouting in the field of *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:156a (*ST*), 216a; 2:37a, 79b, 85b, 240b; 3:106a, 127b (*IR*), 141b (*IR*), 143a (*IR*), 144a (*IR*), 214b, 297a; *ZḤ* 85d (*MhN, Rut*); Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 175–76, n. 99. On *Shekhinah* as "field," see below, p. 270 and n. 127.

269. ***baraitot… tanna'im… amora'im*** **abide in their proper places…** The *tanna'im*, the teachers of the Mishnah, abide "within," namely connected to *Malkhut*. The *baraitot*, the teachings of the Mishnaic period not included in the Mishnah, abide "without—in the curves of the thighs," namely the halls of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. The *amora'im*, the rabbinic teachers living in the three centuries or so following the compilation of the Mishnah, occupy the lowest rung, beneath the knees. Even though the *baraitot* and the *amora'im* occupy lower levels, the Oral Torah—namely *Malkhut*—is elucidated through them. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1088. Although the *Zohar* is set in the Tannaitic world, the Zoharic author seems unconcerned with anachronism; hence the reference to *amora'im*.

270. **through that** ***ein ya'aqov, fountain of Jacob…*** In the verse from Deuteronomy, the word עין (*ein*) is difficult, because the literal sense of "fountain" or "spring" seems to make little sense. Most contemporary scholars understand the noun to derive from the root עון (*on*), "to abide" (see Alter, ad loc.). Cf. Onqelos; Rashi; Ibn Ezra. The *Zohar*, however, insists on the literal sense, by reading *ein ya'akov, fountain of Jacob*, as *Malkhut*—the fountain of *Tif'eret* (Jacob), by means of which Israel will rule.

271. **Joseph the Righteous, pillar of the world…** *Yesod*, symbolized by Joseph, takes its hall—the first hall, the hall of Sapphire Pavement—yet *Yesod* also takes the seventh hall, which is the hall associated with *Binah* but more precisely is the abode of *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*). See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash* for different interpretations. On the seventh hall as *Malkhut*, see *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:246a (*Heikh*), 259a (*Heikh*). On Sapphire Pavement, see 1:41b (*Heikh*).

272. **vision and dream…** On vision and dream and their connection with *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* (the prophets), see *Zohar* 2:247b–248a (*Heikh*; above, p. 75 and n. 60); 2:257b (*Heikh*; above, page 137). See also 1:149a–b. On "minor prophecy," see BT *Berakhot* 55b, 57b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "One who wakens with a [scriptural] verse in his mouth—this is minor prophecy."

"Feet reach feet" refers to the union of the sefirotic feet (*Netsaḥ* and *Hod*) with the feet of the halls (halls two and three). The first hall, the hall of *Yesod*, is located beneath them, as in Exodus 24:10: *And beneath His feet was like a fashioning of sapphire pavement, and like the essence of heaven for purity*. On the phrase "until feet reach feet," see Ḥayyim Vital, *Sefer ha-Gilgulim*, chapter 1.

"Thighs in thighs" refers to the sefirotic thighs in the thighs of the halls, enabling vision and dream, which are derived from prophecy.

273. **Joseph the Righteous is fullness of all…** *Yesod* (the phallus) receives all the divine bounty that descends from *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* and is ready to be channeled into *Malkhut*. The upper *sefirot* yearn for his sake, since it is Joseph (*Yesod*) who enables sexual union between male and female within divinity.

The phrase "all is arrayed by him" might also be rendered "all is prepared for him."

274. **poised to array all…** *Yesod* pours forth the divine bounty into *Malkhut*, which then cascades below—nourishing,

sustaining, and linking all worlds. His union with *Malkhut* delights the upper worlds and bestows existence on the lower worlds. Here, "his hall" seems to signify *Malkhut*.

See Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*), *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, but understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Yoma* 38b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34. Here, *Yesod* is the "foundation" of *Malkhut* and the worlds beneath Her.

275. **foundation of the entire בנייא (*binyana*), construction...** The first hall, Sapphire Pavement, depends on *Yesod* for its vitality. Indeed, *Yesod* is the foundation of the entire "construction," meaning *Malkhut* and the worlds beneath Her. The verse from Genesis, describing the construction of the side from which Eve was fashioned, is interpreted here as signifying the construction of *Malkhut*; and just as a construction rests on a foundation, so *Malkhut* depends on *Yesod*.

The full verse from Genesis reads: *YHVH Elohim constructed* [or: *fashioned*] *the side* [or: *rib*] *that He had taken from the human into a woman, and He brought her to the human*. On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:48b–49a.

276. **transforming face-to-face...** The image derives from *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1: "Rabbi Yirmeyah son of El'azar said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous, as is said: *Male and female He created them* (Genesis 1:27).' Rabbi Shemu'el son of Naḥman said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him with two faces. Then He sawed him and gave him two backs, one on this side and one on that.'" Here the myth is applied to *Malkhut*, who is arrayed to be face-to-face with *Tif'eret*.

See BT *Berakhot* 61a; *Eruvin* 18a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5; Plato, *Symposium* 189d–

191d; *Zohar* 1:2b, 34b; 2:55a, 176b (*SdTs*), 178b (*SdTs*), 231a–b; 3:10b, 44b, 142b–143a (*IR*), 292 (*IZ*).

The word *va-yiven, "he constructed* [or: *built*]," is read here as associated both with הבנה (*havanah*), "understanding," and with התבונן (*hitbonen*), "observe, consider," whence: "he contemplated" (cf. *Zohar* 1:48b). In the first homily, God contemplates raising *Malkhut* to the level of *Binah* (also implied in the verb *va-yiven*). In the second homily, He contemplates His own aspects (apparently the six facets of *Tif'eret*), which He then implants in Her, so that She will be His agent. Finally, He brings Her to *Tif'eret* through *Yesod*. See Scholem's gloss: "How should one understand this image?!"

In the *Zohar*, זה (*zeh*), "this," symbolizes *Yesod*, the divine phallus, who facilitates the union between the maiden (*Malkhut*) and the king (*Tif'eret*). On the verse from Esther, see *Zohar* 2:261a (*Heikh*; below, page 161). See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

277. **Here pertains abstinence from all sins…** In the sixth hall, the hall of desire. On the sixth hall of impurity, see *Zohar* 2:266b–267a (*Heikh*). The verse from Genesis continues: *and that it was lust to the eyes and the tree was lovely to look at, and she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave to her man with her, and he ate*. On the verse, see *Zohar* 1:49b.

278. **things that the body enjoys… that the soul enjoys…** See BT *Berakhot* 57b: "Three things enter the body yet the body does not enjoy them: sweet clover [or: hackberries], inferior [or: bad] dates, and unripe dates. Three things do not enter the body yet the body enjoys them: washing, anointing, and sexual relations."

See BT *Berakhot* 43b, in the name of Rav: "What is it that gives enjoyment to the soul and not the body? You must say that this is fragrance." See also *Zohar* 2:20a (*MhN*), 208b.

279. **Two names contain the other names…** The name *YHVH Elohim* alludes to the union of the six central *sefirot* with their respective halls, which is initiated by the union of Jacob (*Tif'eret*) with the Hall of Desire through the mystery of kisses. (*YHVH* designates the sefirotic realm and *Elohim* the realm of the halls beneath *Malkhut*.) The name *YHVH Tseva'ot* refers to *Yesod*, filled with the flow of the *sefirot* above, poised to unite with *Malkhut*.

On *Tseva'ot*, see *Zohar* 2:257b (*Heikh*; above, page 137). See also 1:17a. On *YHVH Elohim* as the complete name, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3; *Zohar* 2:256b (*Heikh*; above, pp. 129–30 and n. 242), 260a (*Heikh*; below, page 153).

280. **What distinguishes the two?…** Apparently meaning that the name *YHVH Elohim* presides over the union of the sefirotic body with the body of the halls, whereas the name *YHVH Tseva'ot* presides over *Yesod* and its union with the halls.

On the difference between the First and Second Temples, correlated with *Binah* and *Malkhut* respectively, see above at *Zohar* 2:257b–258a (*Heikh*; above, page 139). Here the First Temple is imagined as having enjoyed total body-to-body alignment, characterized by the name *YHVH Elohim*—a higher level than the Second Temple, imagined here as reflecting the union of *Yesod* and *Malkhut* alone, characterized by the name *YHVH Tseva'ot*.

While *Tif'eret* constitutes the torso of the male sefirotic body, *Yesod*, the divine phallus, is the body's consummation. See *Zohar* 1:149b, 153b–154a, 158a, 162b, 246b; 2:214b, 259b (*Heikh*); 3:6a, 53b, 66b. For a different treatment of the distinction between the two names, see 3:269b.

The name *YHVH* descends (from the sefirotic realm), whereas the name *Elohim* ascends (from the realm of the halls). For various interpretations of this passage, see *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam*.

281. **This Foundation is deployed in two modes…** *Yesod* (the divine phallus) arrays not only the halls

“below,” but also the seventh hall—namely *Malkhut*, the female aspect of divinity.

282. **sequence the arrangements…** See *Zohar* 2:244b, 261b (both *Heikh*). The verses from Psalms describe the union attained in the sefirotic realm and the flow of divine bounty consequent upon the unification of the halls. *Kindness* and *truth* designate *Ḥesed* and *Tif’eret* respectively, whereas *justice* and *peace* refer to *Malkhut* and *Tif’eret*. The second phrase also alludes to the union of *Malkhut* and *Tif’eret* (*earth* and *truth, justice* and *heaven*), culminating in *Malkhut* (*our land*) bestowing Her bounty, which has been bestowed to Her by *YHVH* (*Tif’eret*).

283. **Seventh hall…** Corresponding to the three upper *sefirot*, in particular *Binah*—though as will become clear below, the seventh hall is more precisely the abode of *Malkhut*. In contrast to the other halls, there are no living beings, *ophanim, galgalim*, etc., in this hall. Imageless, this seventh hall mirrors the Holy of Holies. Into the seventh hall flows the life of the *sefirot* (from “spirit of all spirits” apparently designating *Ein Sof*, though *Ḥokhmah* is also possible, and the “will of all wills” designating *Keter*) unifying the halls and the sefirotic realm. The “spirit of life” may allude to *Binah*, or more generally the sefirotic life-force now animating the halls. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*). On this and the following paragraph, see Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 292.

See also *Zohar* 1:229a–b: “Chamber of the Holy of Holies is the site of that spirit of all spirits.” On “spirit of all spirits” as *Ḥokhmah*, see *Zohar* 1:77a; 2:174a.

284. **Chamber of the Holy of Holies…** The seventh hall, the abode of *Malkhut*, shares its name with one of the chief designations of *Binah* (supreme soul, the world that is coming), known as Holy of Holies, which it rouses, receiving its flow. *Shekhinah* (*Malkhut*) is called עולם (*Olam*), “World,” which is connected here via assonance both with עליה (*aliyyah*), “ascent,” and עולים (*olim*), “ascending,” for by means of the unification of the halls through human prayer, *Shekhinah*

(lower world) ascends to *Binah* (higher world) and is "hidden" or disappears (*it'allam*) within. The root עלמ (*'lm*) also alludes to עלמה (*almah*), "maiden," namely *Shekhinah*; and in Arabic the same root means "knowledge." The halls likewise ascend with *Shekhinah*. *Shekhinah*'s ascent is paralleled by the ascent of *Binah* to within *Keter* (supernal will) and perhaps *Ein Sof* (secrecy of all secrecy). See *Matoq mi-Devash* for a different interpretation. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:259b (*Heikh*; below, page 151).

On Holy of Holies as *Binah*, see 1:206b; 2:4a, 239b. On the world that is coming, see above, p. 23 and n. 47. On the seventh hall as the Holy of Holies and correlated with *Malkhut*, see Azriel of Gerona's commentary on the liturgy, MS Parma, Stern 46, fol. 79b.

285. **A drawn curtain is spread...** The seventh hall (the locus of the union between the divine male and female) is characterized by secrecy and concealment, marked off from the halls below by a curtain. Within the hall, the "purging cover" also serves to guard the hall's secrecy; and within that purging cover (apparently meaning the ark, namely *Malkhut*) the divine flow channeled by *Yesod* gathers. This flow is the spring of the well, the bounty conveyed by *Yesod* to *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*). See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash* for various interpretations.

The "curtain" and "purging cover" derive from the description of the Dwelling (or "Tabernacle") in Exodus (see 25:17–22 and 26:33–34). The curtain marked off the holiest region of the sanctuary—beyond which lay the Ark of the Covenant, the purging cover, and the cherubim. The purging cover (*kapporet*, the precise meaning of which is unclear) was a solid slab of pure gold, placed over the ark. At each end of this gold cover, a cherub was hammered out. The two cherubim faced each other, with their heads bent slightly downward and their fully outstretched wings turned upward, sheltering the rest of the cover and the ark beneath. The divine voice was thought to issue from the

space above the cover and between the two cherubim. The Hebrew (and Aramaic) words for “curtain” and “cover” are related: פרכת (*Parokhet*) and כפרת (*Kapporet*); and the manuscripts and printed editions vary in their deployment of the terms, some reading *parokhet* in place of *kapporet*. On the meaning of *kapporet*, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:1014.

On the drawn curtain, see *Zohar* 1:65a; 2:165b, 226a; 3:128a (*IR*); Valabregue-Perry, *Ba-Nistar u-va-Nigleh*, 191–201. On the purging cover, see *Zohar* 2:277a; *ZḤ* 80b (*MhN, Rut*). On the spring of the well, see *Zohar* 2:135b, 136b. On the ceaseless flow of the divine river, see Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 229–51.

286. **This one is filled from there…** *Malkhut* is filled with the bounty flowing from *Binah* and conveyed by *Yesod* in the seventh hall. The seventh hall, the abode of *Malkhut*, is also configured to receive, as explained in the following paragraph. See *Zohar* 1:45a–b (*Heikh*).

287. **all those holy spirits and souls that descend…** The seventh hall is the first transit-point of the soul, where it must wait until ready to descend below. On the descent of souls through the halls, see *Zohar* 2:246a, 253a (both *Heikh*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:592, 749–50.

The reference to being “delayed” until the Messiah’s arrival apparently alludes to an idea outlined in the fifth hall (2:253a; above, page 106): since the destruction of the Temple, no other (new) souls have entered the halls. See *Or Yaqar*; cf. *Sullam* for a different interpretation.

The verse from Psalms is quoted in an eschatological context in *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:2; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Aḥarei Mot* 3; *Midrash Tehillim* 75:2; *Zohar* 1:102b (*MhN*), 114a (*MhN*), 115a (*MhN*), 116a (*MhN*), 119a, 135a (*MhN*), 182a; 2:57b; 3:16a.

288. **the delight delighted by the blessed Holy One…** The seventh hall is the site of the nocturnal delight, whereby God delights in the souls of the righteous. See *Zohar* 1:10b, 60b, 72a, 77a–b, 82b, 92a–b, 132b, 136b,

178b, 231b; 2:18b (*MhN*), 46a, 130a–b, 136a, 173b, 195b–196a; 3:21b–22b, 52b, 193a; *ZḤ* 13c (*MhN*); Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 146–50; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 121–145.

The seventh hall is also the *telos* of the lower halls.

289. **when all the limbs conjoin with higher limbs…** In other words, the lower halls join with the upper halls—or perhaps more specifically with the seventh hall. Either way, the lower halls' only desire is union and incorporation with the seventh hall, from where they receive the divine bounty. On limbs, see above, note 240.

290. **sequence arrangements, to align configurations…** See *Zohar* 2:244b, 261b (both *Heikh*). The halls must be "arranged," and one must know their order and configuration. See also *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*).

On being beloved in both worlds, see BT *Qiddushin* 71a, describing one who knows the Name of Forty-two Letters; *Bahir* 80 (111), describing one who knows the Name of Twelve Letters. See also BT *Berakhot* 17a; *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*), 152b, 242b; 2:46a, 228a.

291. **this hall abides in utter concealment…** Being the site not only of the union of the divine male and female, but also of the divine flow's influx, the seventh hall is entirely concealed. See *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*). "Sealed covenant" refers to *Yesod*, the divine phallus, the agent of sexual union. The "radiance of the supernal lamp" refers to *Binah*.

292. **This hall is called *ark of the covenant*…** The seventh hall shares its name with a name of *Shekhinah* (*Malkhut*) because the seventh hall is the abode of, and identical with, *Malkhut*. Souls pour forth from *Yesod* ("Righteous One") into *Malkhut*, from where they disperse among the righteous (that is, flesh-and-blood righteous on earth), only to return upon death to *Shekhinah*.

Shekhinah is the *ark* that houses the *sefirah* of *Yesod*, known as *the covenant*. See *Zohar* 1:2a, 16b, 33b, 50b, 59b, 228b,

251a; 2:13a, 214b, 235b; 3:199a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 75 (95).

On *Shekhinah*'s location between Righteous One and the righteous, see *Zohar* 1:153b, 155a–b, 245b; 2:211b. On the seventh hall as *Malkhut*, see 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:246a (*Heikh*; above, page 62); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:593–94, 749.

293. **In two respects *ark of the covenant* receives souls...** First, *Shekhinah* receives souls from *Yesod*; then after death, from the righteous below. Souls "embrace above and below" by sojourning above in the celestial realm and below on earth. The complete or perfected soul returns to *Shekhinah*.

On the soul's perfection accomplished through its sojourn on earth, see Saadia Gaon, *Emunot ve-De'ot* 6:4; *Zohar* 1:235a, 245b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 299; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 46–47 (translated in Matt, *Essential Kabbalah*, 148); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 8a–10a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:752–54.

294. **The spring of the well never withdraws from the well...** *Yesod* remains attached to *Malkhut*. By virtue of their union that transpires in the seventh hall, all the halls below are united with the *sefirot* in perfect alignment. On "the spring of the well," see *Zohar* 2:135b, 136b.

295. **intercourse from behind...** Though not strictly prohibited by Jewish law, the *Zohar* here rejects "intercourse from behind" since it does not enable face-to-face gazing between male and female. When the *sefirot* and halls are properly configured, face-to-face gazing prevails. Improper intercourse impairs the divine alignment.

On "intercourse from behind," see JT *Qiddushin* 1:1, 58c; BT *Sanhedrin* 58b (and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *mi ikka*); *Nedarim* 20a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 18:5; 20:7; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Issurei Bi'ah* 21:9.

The full verse from Genesis reads: *Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife and*

they become one flesh.

296. **two desires: one, the sixth hall; the other, this seventh hall…** Desire and union on high has two facets: Jacob, signifying the union of the six central *sefirot* of *Tif'eret* with their respective halls—through the mystery of kisses initiated in the sixth hall (2:256b; above, page 128); and Joseph, signifying the union of *Yesod* with the seventh hall. The seventh hall, *Shekhinah*, receives divine life from both modes. From Jacob it receives divine life to animate celestial beings and realms below; from Joseph it receives souls to pour forth below. Sefirotically, Jacob is higher than Joseph, yet Jacob takes the sixth hall (kisses) and Joseph the seventh (intercourse). See *Zohar* 2:258b (*Heikh*; above, p. 144 and nn. 279 and 280). See *Or Yaqar*.

On *Yesod* as conveying the soul, see *Zohar* 2:246a (*Heikh*; above, page 62); see also 1:197a, 198a, 205b, 209a; 2:70a.

297. **These two aspects branch into two modes…** Jacob (signifying *Tif'eret* and the mystery of kisses) conveys divine energy and flow to the breasts located in the fifth hall (see 2:253a, 256b–257a), from which angelic hosts are nourished. For his part, Joseph (signifying *Yesod* and sexual union) conveys the divine flow to *Malkhut* to engender human souls. On angels suckling, cf. the depiction of Metatron in *Zohar* 2:65b.

298. **Even so, Joseph nourishes the entire body…** Even though we said that the spirit of life descends from Jacob (*Tif'eret*), nonetheless Joseph (*Yesod*) nourishes the body (*Malkhut*). The divine spirit generated by Jacob's cleaving (kisses) flows into *Yesod* and then into *Malkhut*. The combined cleaving of Jacob and Joseph fills the breasts to suckle "all," apparently meaning angels and human souls alike.

299. **a single point…** When the halls and all their contents are united within the seventh hall, *Shekhinah*, the single centric point, is concealed within. *Shekhinah* is concealed within the halls just as *Ein Sof* is concealed within

the *sefirot*. And just as the four chambers of the nut are bound together at a single point in the center, so too *Shekhinah* binds the halls together.

On *Shekhinah* as a single point, see *Zohar* 1:46b, 72a, 229a; 2:157a, 184b, 260a (*Heikh*), 268a (*Heikh*; below, page 207); 3:191a, 250a–b; *ZḤ* 69d–70a (*ShS*); Scholem, *Major Trends*, 391, n. 80. On *Shekhinah* concealed within, see *Zohar* 2:258b–259a (*Heikh*; above, page 146). On the motif of the nut, see 1:44b (*Heikh*; above, p. 46 and n. 101); 2:254b (*Heikh*).

300. **sacrifice follows this pattern…** The unification of the halls and *sefirot* accomplished through prayer parallels the effect of the sacrifices. See *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*).

Maimonides had relativized the importance of the sacrificial offerings, explaining them away as a concession to the primitive nature of ancient Israel. The *Zohar* counters by emphasizing their vital role in unifying the upper realms. See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:32; *Zohar* 1:35a, 64b–65a, 164a, 176b, 206b; 2:141a, 226a; 3:4b–5a, 294a (*IZ*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:878–90. On priests and Levites as *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* and their function in the Temple, see *Zohar* 1:64b; 3:32a, 39a, 176a.

301. **supreme soul of all arouses, suffusing all…** When all the halls are united within the seventh hall, and when the male and female aspects of divinity are conjoined, then *Binah* (supreme soul) is aroused to pour forth bounty below. Beyond *Binah, Ein Sof*—or perhaps *Ein Sof* and *Keter* (Will forever ungrasped)—infuses the *sefirot* beneath. The passage here quotes *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*), though it seems that a phrase is missing.

See also *Zohar* 1:65a, 245a; 2:216b, 220b, 226a, 239a, 244b (*Heikh*). On the expression “unto infinity,” see Valabregue-Perry, *Ba-Nistar u-va-Nigleh*, 161–166.

302. **Radiance of supreme soul ascends deep within…** *Binah* ascends deep within the sefirotic heights to

illuminate below. *Ḥokhmah* (concealment of Thought, containing the seed of all being) enters within *Binah*. Connected to *Ḥokhmah*, in turn connected to *Keter* (Will of Thought), *Binah* is sweetened, though its apprehension remains dim. As *Keter* ascends to grasp *Ein Sof*, *Binah* receives something of *Keter*'s illumination. See *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*; above, p. 52 and n. 111). See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam* for various interpretations.

303. **supreme radiance with a radiance yet more hidden and concealed…** Apparently meaning *Binah* within *Ḥokhmah*, extending on through *Keter* unto Infinity.

304. **When he needed to prolong, he prolonged…** On Moses' lengthy and short prayers, see *Zohar* 2:244b–245a (*Heikh*; above, pp. 54–55 and n. 3). See also 1:41a (*Heikh*).

305. **Whoever prolongs in a site where one should shorten…** The *Zohar* here cites two seemingly contradictory teachings. See BT *Berakhot* 54b–55a: "Rav Yehudah said, 'There are three things, the prolongation of which prolongs one's days and years: prolongation of prayer, prolongation of a meal, and prolongation on the toilet.' Is the prolongation of prayer a virtue?! For Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan, 'Whoever prolongs his prayer and speculates on it [or: expects that it will be granted] will eventually suffer heartache, as is said: *Hope deferred* [i.e., prayer prolonged] *is sickness of heart* (Proverbs 13:12).'" See also BT *Berakhot* 13b, 32b, 47a; *Zohar* 1:202b; 3:164a.

The resolution of the contradiction hinges on the significance of "heart," understood here as *Shekhinah*; and depending on Her condition, one must either prolong or shorten prayer. Thus, when *Shekhinah* is ready for sexual union with the male aspect of divinity, one must not delay unification through lengthy prayer—thereby causing pain to *Shekhinah*—but rather get out of the way and leave the divine

couple alone. Prolonged prayer is necessary, however, when the halls and *sefirot* need to be configured.

On the verse from Proverbs, and on "heart" signifying *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 2:197b. Cf. BT *Bava Batra* 145b.

306. **kind with kind...** *Shekhinah* abides in the seventh hall as a concealed point poised to receive the divine male. Their fusion is perfect since they are of the same kind—unlike Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, who sought to combine the demonic with the holy when *they offered strange fire in the presence of YHVH* (Leviticus 10:1). According to the *Zohar*, the *strange fire* symbolizes the demonic feminine. See *Zohar* 1:73b, 116b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 37 (44).

307. **(*Ma'aseh Merkavah*), The Work of Combination** This term is usually rendered "The Account of the Chariot"; it refers to Ezekiel's vision of the divine chariot-throne (chapters 1 and 10), as well as to the Jewish mystical literature of antiquity. Here, the term is interpreted as the "The Work of Combination," namely the work of combining hall with hall, spirit with spirit, hall with *sefirah*, and male with female. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:594.

308. ***YHVH Elohim*—the complete name...** The first human being was a product of the combined divine name. Here the combined name points to the fusion of the male and female aspects of divinity. Cf. Wolfson, *Luminal Darkness*, 120, who interprets the passage to indicate that it is the human who forms the complete name—*YHVH Elohim*—through the act of combination. On the complete name, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3; *Zohar* 2:256b, 258b, 262a (all *Heikh*).

309. **Holy Name—ramifying above, ramifying below...** The divine name *YHVH*, the explicit name, is usually associated with *Tif'eret*, the sefirotic center, and less frequently with *Ḥokhmah* and *Keter*. This name "ramifies" above and below, meaning that *Binah* (upper world) is sometimes associated with this name through its union with

the higher *sefirot*, and likewise *Malkhut* (lower world) through its union with *Tif'eret*, or with the triad *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, which together comprise the supernal holy chariot. The name *YHVH* thus spans all of the *sefirot*. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam* for various interpretations.

310. **From this side emanate four chariots...** Four chariots emerge from *Binah*, namely *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut* (who together are a chariot for *Binah*); and four chariots emerge from *Malkhut*, namely the four archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel (who together are a chariot for *Malkhut*). All the chariots of the lower worlds beneath the *sefirot* follow the same fourfold pattern and are sustained by the divine name אדני (*Adonai*), containing four letters.

The chariots "sustained" by *Adonai* allude to the four *galgalim* (or *ophanim*) in the first hall, termed here *mountains of bronze*, apparently because they derive from the two spirits of the first hall that are also called *mountains of bronze* (see next paragraph). "Higher mountains" signify *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, as do silver, gold, and bronze respectively; and "lower mountains" apparently signify their derivative equivalent beneath *Malkhut* in the realm of the halls. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam* for various interpretations.

On "chariots" as signifying *galgalim* (or *ophanim*) in the first hall, see *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*); 2:246a–b (*Heikh*; above, page 65).

Zechariah 6:1 reads: *I looked up again and I saw four chariots were coming out from between the two mountains; the mountains were mountains of bronze*.

On *mountains of bronze*, see *Zohar* 2:135a, 139a, 229a, 233a. On mountains as symbolizing the patriarchs and thus kabbalistically signifying *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 353, *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:6; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 28; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:4, 26; 28:2; *Zohar* 1:87a, 208b; 2:109b. On the sefirotic and

alchemical symbolism of gold, silver, and bronze, see *Zohar* 2:24a–b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 94–96 (120–22); Scholem, *Alchemy and Kabbalah*, 26–30.

311. **four chariots emanating from those two spirits…** The two spirits of the first hall are called "two mountains." They are the *mountains of bronze*—the source of the chariots (known as *ophanim* or *galgalim*) in the first hall. See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*); 2:246a–b (*Heikh*).

312. **four chariots that wield that name of אלף דלת (*Alef, dalet*), embedded in Sandalfon…** See *Zohar* 2:246a–b (*Heikh*; above, pages 64 and 65). On Sandalfon as Prince of the Countenance, see *ZḤ* 38d, 80b (*MhN, Rut*). On horses and chariots, see Zechariah 6:1–8. Cf. *Zohar* 3:228b (*RM*), where Metatron is described as the horse of *Tif'eret*.

313. **This holy name combines with יוד הא (*yod, he*)…** The divine name אדני (*Adonai*) combines with the explicit name יהוה (*YHVH*), yielding the fused name יאהדונהי (*YAHDVNHY*). The divine name אלהים (*Elohim*), however, does not combine with *YHVH* in this manner. Originating in *Binah* as אלהים חיים (*Elohim Ḥayyim*), the name *Elohim* ramifies below, to the *sefirot Gevurah* and *Malkhut*, as well as to angels outside the sefirotic realm—all of whom can be designated by this name (see *Zohar* 1:15b). Its nature is thus to expand and not be contained by being incorporated into another name.

On *YAHDVNHY*, see *Zohar* 2:246b (*Heikh*; above, page 66), 260b (*Heikh*; below, page 158). See also Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67; *Zohar* 1:100b (*ST*); 2:235b; Gikatilla, *Sod ha-Ḥashmal*, s.v. *ke-mar'eh ha-bazaq*, in *Arzei Levanon*, 42. In *Ra'aya Meheimna* and *Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*, later strata of the Zoharic corpus, this name appears widely.

314. **The name comprising all names…** In the *Zohar*, the divine name יהוה (*YHVH*) is often understood as an icon that encodes all the *sefirot*: י (*yod*), symbolizing the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*; the feminine marker ה (*he*), symbolizing *Binah*, the Divine Mother; ו (*vav*)—whose

numerical value is six—symbolizing the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*; and the final ה (*he*), symbolizing *Shekhinah*.

Here, the sense of *YHVH* comprising all names is different, based on three different ways of writing the divine name: simply, i.e., יהוה (*YHVH*)—four letters, apparently indicating *Keter*; the letters spelled out, i.e., יוד הא ואו הא (*yod, he, vav, he*)—10 letters, apparently indicating *Ḥokhmah*; and spelling out the letters of the spelled-out letters, i.e., יוד ואו דלת, הא אלף, ואו אלף ואו, הא אלף (*yod vav dalet, he alef, vav alef vav, he alef*)—28 letters, apparently indicating *Binah*. The three modes of writing the name *YHVH* thus total 42. Additionally, the simple divine name, *YHVH*, designates *Tif'eret*, while the numerical value of the name with the letters spelled out is 45, which matches the numerical value of מה (*Mah*), "What"—a name for *Shekhinah*. Hence the entire sefirotic realm is contained with the divine name.

The number 42 alludes to the forty-two-letter name of God mentioned in the name of Rav, though not recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. See Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 94–95. On permutations of the divine name *YHVH* into the forty-two-letter name, see *Zohar* 1:1a, 9a. See also 1:15b, 30a; 2:92b (*Piq*), 130b, 132b, 175b, 234b; 3:78a, 172b; *ZḤ* 42a.

The "spark of impenetrable darkness" designates the first impulse of creativity from within the hidden depths of divinity. By means of the spark emerging from *Ein Sof* and *Keter*, the sefirotic realm is mapped out. See *Zohar* 2:254b (*Heikh*; above, p. 118 and n. 200).

On *YHVH* as the name comprising all names, see *Zohar* 1:19a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 288; Joseph Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 1:48.

315. **This name comprises all the names—mnemonic: אהיולדינם (*AHYVLDYNM*)...** As noted, the name יהוה (*YHVH*)—signifying *Keter*, the first primordial *sefirah*, which is co-eternal with *Ein Sof*—contains all the names, i.e., all the *sefirot*. They are encoded in the mnemonic. Precisely how the

nine *sefirot* beneath *Keter* are encoded in the mnemonic containing nine letters, however, is not clear. See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash* for various explanations. The mnemonic appears to contain letters from various divine names (יהוה אהיה אלהים אדני) while apparently dropping repeated letters; hence "some going out, some coming in." Furthermore, additional divine names can be derived from the letters of the mnemonic through various combinations. The mnemonic appears here as in O17, *Or Yaqar*, and Mantua. Other manuscripts and printed editions contain various (though similar) options.

316. **letters combine within—letters entering, letters departing…** Alluding to the mnemonic of nine letters that is contained in *Keter*, source of the spark, and the various divine names that can be derived from the mnemonic. Some of the names require additional letters while others are intimated with letters lacking. See *Or Yaqar*. The phrase "holy ones of the Most High" derives from Daniel 7:18–27, where it refers to Israel. Here it designates the kabbalists.

317. ***Human hands were under their wings…*** Namely, the wings of the *ḥayyot*—angelic "living beings" who carry the divine throne. According to BT *Pesaḥim* 119a, the image of the hands alludes to "the hand of the blessed Holy One, which is spread out under the wings of the *ḥayyot* to accept penitents." See *Zohar* 2:75b; *ZḤ* 39b. On the equation between "hands" and "places," see *Targum Onqelos* on Deuteronomy 23:13, where he renders יד (*yad*), "marker," as אתר (*atar*), "place."

318. **holy names presiding over every single rung…** The *hands* are in fact the divine names—by virtue of which the lowly human being can ascend and prevail on high; they are keys to unlock the celestial realms.

319. **flow, from above below…** The inner meaning of the divine command to Moses to *stretch* his hand *over the heavens* is to bring down the divine flow from his rung

Tif'eret. On the interpretation of the verb נטה (*neteh*)—which in the verse from Exodus means "stretch" but is interpreted here according to another of its meanings: "turn, incline, bend"—cf. *Zohar* 2:48a. The verse from Exodus continues: *that there be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man and upon beast and upon all the grass of the field in the land of Egypt*. The simple sense of the phrase *over the heavens* is "toward the sky."

320. ***seven maids chosen for her from the king's palace*** *Shekhinah* is the mystery of faith residing within the halls. The halls below are the *seven maids* of Esther (*Shekhinah*), and they need to be arrayed and "consummated" to enable Her indwelling. Though only intimated throughout the *Heikhalot*, the halls are understood as female—"maidens" of *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 1:194a; *ZḤ* 64a (*ShS*).

The full verse from Esther reads: *The girl* [Esther] *pleased him and won his favor, and he hastened to furnish her with her cosmetics and her rations, and the seven maids chosen for her from the king's palace, and he treated* [or: *distinguished*] *her and her maids with special kindness in the harem*.

321. **First hall...** The *Zohar* now outlines how each of the seven halls is arrayed through the prayers of the morning liturgy, beginning with the prayer *Yotser Or* ("Who forms light") and extending through the *Amidah*. Interestingly, the recitation of the *Shema* is not discussed.

The quotations are all part of the opening of the *Yotser Or* liturgical unit. The opening line, which is adapted from Isaiah 45:7, is interpreted as alluding to the two spirits of the first hall; and the verse from Psalms, to the various celestial beings inhabiting the hall. The phrase "The King exalted alone from of old" is from the same liturgical unit; here it is interpreted as alluding to the combined divine name found in this hall. For the word אז (*az*)—literally "then" but understood in the Psalm poetically as "old; ancient

time”—has the numerical value of 8, which matches the 8 letters of *YAHDVNHY* (see above, note 313).

On the first hall, see *Zohar* 1:41b–42a (*Heikh*); 2:245a–246b (*Heikh*). On the *Yotser Or* prayer, see also 2:132a, 205b.

322. **Second hall...** The prayer אל ברוך (*El barukh*), “Blessed God,” is an acrostic, its first twenty-two words each beginning with a successive alphabetical letter. See *Zohar* 2:132a, 205b. Here these letters are understood as “the small letters of the alphabet” and are associated with *Orpeni’el*, the chief spirit of the second hall.

Certain letters in a Torah scroll are written large, for example the ב (*bet*) of בראשית (*be-reshit*), *In the beginning* (Genesis 1:1). Others are written small, for example, the א (*alef*) of ויקרא (*va-yiqra*), *And He called* (Leviticus 1:1). In the *Zohar*, the large letters are associated with *Binah* and the small letters with *Shekhinah*. Here, the small letters are associated with the second hall located beneath *Shekhinah*. On small and large letters, see *Zohar* 1:3b, 159b; 2:132a, 174a, 180b, 205b, 228b; 3:2a, 220a; *ZḤ* 66c (*ShS*), 74c–d (*ShS*).

On *Orpeni’el*, see *Zohar* 2:246b–247a (*Heikh*; above, p. 67 and n. 39). On the *Qedushah* and the second hall, see 2:247b (*Heikh*; above, p. 75 and n. 59). On the second hall, see 1:42a–b (*Heikh*); 2:246b–248a (*Heikh*).

323. **Third hall...** The prayer that begins “To the blessed God they shall offer sweet melodies” follows the *Qedushah* of *Yotser Or*. Precisely how it is associated with the third hall is not clear but see above at note 106. See *Or Yaqar*. On the third hall, see *Zohar* 1:42b–43b (*Heikh*); 2:248a–251a (*Heikh*). On the third hall and its correlation with this prayer, see Azriel of Gerona’s commentary on the liturgy, MS Parma, Stern 46, fol. 77a.

324. **Fourth hall...** On the fourth hall, the Hall of Merit (Judgment), see *Zohar* 1:43b–44a (*Heikh*); 2:251a–253a (*Heikh*). The light of the right and the name *El* indicate *Ḥesed*, implying a favorable judgment. One who emerges from

judgment favorably has his world renewed. The chief spirit of the hall is *Zekhut'el*, and the prayer from which the phrase associated with this hall derives begins with לאל (*la-El*), *To God*. On *Zekhut'el*, see *Zohar* 2:251a (*Heikh*; above, page 94).

325. **Fifth hall...** On the fifth hall, the Hall of Love, see *Zohar* 1:44a–b; 2:253a–b (*Heikh*). Here, divine flow is drawn down from the *sefirah Ḥesed*. See 2:254b (*Heikh*). On *El Shaddai*, see 2:253a (*Heikh*), 256b–257a (*Heikh*).

In the Sephardic daily morning liturgy, the paragraph preceding the *Shema* begins *Ahavat olam* ("Eternal love"), whereas in the Ashkenazic liturgy it begins *Ahavah rabbah* ("Abounding love"). See BT *Berakhot* 11b. See also *Zohar* 2:202b; *ZḤ* 42a.

On the fifth hall and its correlation with this blessing, see Azriel of Gerona's commentary on the liturgy, MS Parma, Stern 46, fol. 77b.

326. **Sixth hall...** On the sixth hall—the Hall of Desire—where the halls and *sefirot* unite in the mystery of the kiss, see *Zohar* 1:44b–45a (*Heikh*); 2:253b–258b (*Heikh*). This hall is associated with the blessing immediately following the *Shema*. Though passed over in silence here, perhaps the proclamation of divine unity in the *Shema* entails the unifications of the central *sefirot* with their respective halls. See *Zohar* 2:200b. According to *Or Yaqar*, the *vav*s ("ands") joining the words indicate *Tif'eret*—the *sefirah* of this hall—who is often symbolized by the letter ו (*vav*), whose numerical value is six. See also *ZḤ* 42a; Moses de León, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 29–30. On the sixth hall and its correlation with the blessing "True and firm," see Azriel of Gerona's commentary on the liturgy, MS Parma, Stern 46, fol. 79a.

327. **Seventh hall...** Once the halls are arrayed perfectly through the preceding prayers, the ultimate union can now take place in the seventh hall, the Holy of Holies—corresponding to the *Amidah*, the central prayer of the morning liturgy, which is uttered in a whisper. As the worshiper seeks to bind all to Infinity, the heart's aspiration

is decisive, hence the “whisper”—beyond words. See *Zohar* 2:244b (*Heikh*; above, p. 54 and n. 1).

The phrase “seventh with seventh” may allude to the union of the seventh hall (also the abode of *Malkhut*) with *Binah* above—the seventh *sefirah*, counting from *Yesod*. Alternatively, it may refer to the union of the first hall (the seventh below) with the seventh hall. It might also indicate the union of *Yesod* (the seventh *sefirah*, counting from *Binah*) with *Malkhut*. See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. See also *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*; above, p. 50 and n. 107, citing Tishby’s explanation). See also Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:241–42; 3:960–61.

Here the “source of life” indicates *Binah* (though in the following paragraph it might also indicate the seventh hall). Cf. *Zohar* 2:135b, 137b (where it appears to designate *Ḥokhmah*); see also 2:225a, 238a; 3:34a; 270b–271a (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 87d (*MhN, Rut*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:960, 1003. n. 159.

On the expression “unto Infinity,” see Valabregue-Perry, *Ba-Nistar u-va-Nigleh*, 161–166.

“The secrecy of the letters of the seven supernal holy names” is explained below.

On praying “in a whisper,” see BT *Berakhot* 24b, 31a; *Sotah* 32b; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 26, p. 140; *Zohar* 1:209b–210a; 2:202a, 262b (*Heikh*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:965–66; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 60. On the mystical significance of the *Amidah* in the *Zohar*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:966–67.

328. **seventh hall—the source of life…** Referring either to *Binah*, who is the “life” of the *sefirot* beneath Her, or to the seventh and highest of the halls, which is the abode of *Malkhut*, who is the “life” of the halls below. “Receiving the seventh from below” might thus allude to *Binah* receiving *Malkhut*—or alternatively, to the seventh hall’s receiving the first hall, which is the seventh hall below. If the former, one ascends to *Binah* through *Malkhut*; and if the latter, one

ascends to *Malkhut* (the seventh hall) through the first hall. In any case, the first blessing of the *Amidah* pertains to the seventh hall, be it *Binah* or *Malkhut*. This confusion is inherent to the structure of the divine and celestial realms in the *Heikhalot*, as the lowest hall is incorporated in the highest hall (equivalent to *Malkhut*), which in turn ascends to *Binah*. See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:960–61. "Enters whoever enters" refers to the person in prayer.

329. **Blessed—enhancement of all those below…** Brimming with the contents of all the halls below, and abiding within the seventh hall, *Malkhut* is termed "Blessed"—the first word of the first blessing of the *Amidah*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:135b, 271a (*Piq*).

330. **אתה (*Attah*), *You*… את ה (*alef tav, he*)…** In the *Zohar*, *Malkhut* is known as אתה (*attah*), "you." As the most accessible of all the *sefirot*, She can be addressed by the second-person personal pronoun. Here the word *attah* is divided into two components. The first piece, את (*alef tav*), indicates the fullness of divine speech from א (*alef*) to ת (*tav*), which—being the first and last letters of the alphabet—represent everything in between, i.e., all language. That divine speech then streams from the higher *sefirot* into *Malkhut*, who is symbolized by the second component of *attah*, namely the letter ה (*he*). United with *Yesod* (the river, also symbolized by the masculine demonstrative "this"), *Malkhut* (the maiden) ascends to unite with *Tif'eret* (the king) and receives *et kol*, "all," that She desires—namely את (*et*), the potency of the twenty-two letters of the alphabet.

On *Malkhut* as *attah*, see *Zohar* 1:15b, 37a, 154b, 158b, 169a, 198a, 205b; 2:23b, 70a (*RR*), 104a, 138b, 140a, 179b, 221a; 3:199a, 271b (*Piq*). On the verse from Esther, see 2:258b (*Heikh*; above, page 143).

331. **binding of the supernal King above…** Apparently referring to the union of *Binah* ("supernal king") with *Malkhut*—the former being symbolized here by אלהינו

(*eloheinu*), "our God," and the latter by *YHVH*. See *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

332. **mystery of the fathers—to bless Her…** The opening blessing of the *Amidah* is known as "the fathers." In Kabbalah, the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob symbolize the *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. *Malkhut* must be blessed by each one, and so each father is associated with *Binah*—designated by אלהי (*elohei*), "God of"—in order to draw down divine bounty to be bestowed upon *Malkhut*. Just as *Malkhut* does not abandon Her maidens (the halls) below, so *Binah* does not forsake the fathers. The referent of the pronouns "Her" and "She" is not clear; they may refer to either *Binah* or *Malkhut*. See *Or Yaqar, Sullam, Matoq mi-Devash* for various interpretations.

On the kabbalistic significance of the "fathers" in the opening blessing of the *Amidah*, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 81.

333. **The great, mighty, and awesome God…** This phrase pertains to the ascent of the sefirotic triad *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (represented by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) to within *Binah* (*El*, "God"). At first, these three *sefirot* receive power from *Binah*, and now they ascend and enter within Her. Containing the fathers within, *Binah* is "supreme God"—comprising all subsidiary *sefirot*—and ready to bestow divine bounty. The phrase *the great, mighty, and awesome God* derives from Deuteronomy 10:17. See *Zohar* 1:19a; 2:78b–79a; 3:274a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 81; idem, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 31–2. See *Or Yaqar* for a different interpretation.

334. **enter Her womb…** *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* enter the womb of *Binah*. At the conclusion of the first blessing of the *Amidah*, the sefirotic triad is released from gestation within *Binah*—and ready to bestow flow upon *Malkhut*. The blessing concludes by invoking Abraham, the divine right side, whereupon the triad can emerge appropriately

configured. On the prostration accompanying this blessing, see BT *Berakhot* 12a, 34a.

335. **This seventh hall is a mystery of the supernal King…** Namely, *Binah*. At the conclusion of the first blessing, *Binah* releases the fathers for the sake of the "maiden," namely *Malkhut*.

336. **holy name בוכו (*Buku*)…** *Binah* is the seventh hall, characterized by the mysterious divine name בוכו (*Buku*), which is derived by replacing each letter of the name אהיה (*Ehyeh*) with the succeeding letter. א (*Alef*) is replaced with ב (*bet*), ה (*he*) with ו (*vav*), י (*yod*) with כ (*kaf*), and ה (*he*) with ו (*vav*). Here the resulting name בוכו (*Buku*) is read as an acronym: ברכה וחסד כח ומשפט (*berakhah va-ḥesed koaḥ u-mishpat*), "blessing and loving-kindness, power and justice," interpreted as alluding to *Malkhut, Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* respectively. The divine name *Ehyeh* usually denotes *Keter*, though it can also signify *Binah*. See for example, *Zohar* 3:11a.

337. **embraces blessings… through the mystery of the fifth hall…** At the culmination of the first blessing of the *Amidah, Malkhut* (*shield*) embraces the blessings of the fathers that have been released from *Binah*. The blessings are received through the agency of the fifth hall, Love, corresponding to *Ḥesed*, symbolized by *Abraham*. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash* for different interpretations.

338. **they begin embracing in the fifth hall** According to the structure of the *Heikhalot*, where the hall of *Tif'eret* (hall six) occupies a higher rung than the hall of *Ḥesed* (hall five), one might have expected the sixth hall to receive the divine bounty from *Malkhut* first. Nevertheless, despite the fact that unification begins in the sixth hall ("one who attains first"), it is the fifth hall, the righthand hall, that receives blessings first—because blessings originate from the right. See *Matoq mi-Devash* for a different interpretation. Cf. *Or Yaqar*.

339. **אתה גבור (*Attah gibbor*), You are mighty...** The beginning of the second blessing of the *Amidah*. As noted above (n. 330), *attah* is a name of *Malkhut*. In this blessing *Malkhut* is united with *gibbor*, "mighty," signifying *Gevurah*. Whereas *Gevurah* is strict judgment, *Malkhut* is lenient judgment; hence: "two judgments." The blessings of *Binah* that flow through the sefirotic triad into *Malkhut* ameliorate the judgment; and so even here mercy prevails, as indicated by the continuation of the second blessing ("revives the dead, supports the fallen," etc.). In fact the blessing explicitly reads: "revives the dead with abundant mercy."

340. **holy name called אכדטם (*Akdtm*)...** The activities of mercy are by the agency of the divine name אכדטם (*Akdtm*), which is derived from the name אלהים (*Elohim*) by replacing the middle three letters with their preceding letters. So, א (*alef*) remains, ל (*lamed*) is replaced with כ (*kaf*), ה (*he*) is replaced with ד (*dalet*), י (*yod*) is replaced with ט (*tet*), and ם (*mem*) remains.

The sense of the paragraph is as follows: The name *Elohim*, signifying *Gevurah*, ascends above to *Binah* to be crowned in the name *Elohim Ḥayyim*. *Elohim* generates another name, *Akdtm*, derivative of *Elohim*, with a lesser numerical value than *Elohim* ("diminishes letters, embracing deficiency")—thereby implying its status as judgment ameliorated, or mercy. The name *Akdtm*, which indicates mercy, descends from *Binah* below to the fourth hall of Merit —which is associated with judgment—in order to ameliorate judgment within that hall and to once again attain the name *Elohim*. The latter may allude to *Malkhut*, whose judgment is less harsh than *Gevurah*. The subject "it" in the phrase "and it diminishes letters, embracing deficiency" may refer to either *Binah* or the name *Akdtm*. On the entire paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

341. **embracing from the center of all...** Once the letters of the names בוכו (*Buku*) and אכדטם (*Akdtm*) descend to

the fifth and fourth hall respectively by means of the first two blessings of the *Amidah*, only then does *Malkhut* begin embracing blessings from *Tif'eret*, the sefirotic center, via the sixth hall, blending right and left. *You* signifies *Malkhut* (see above, note 330).

342. **holiness and a surplus of holiness…** The opening of the third blessing of the *Amidah* reads: "You are holy and Your name is holy." Given that "You" and "name" both signify *Malkhut*, and that "holy" signifies *Tif'eret*—and thus both phrases seem to denote the union of *Malkhut* and *Tif'eret*—what is accomplished by the repetition? Other blessings that also mention "You" (e.g., "You are mighty," "You endow") contain no such repetition. Why then does the third blessing? The third blessing pertains to the union of *Malkhut* and *Tif'eret*, the male and female grades of divinity. Accordingly, this union requires holiness and surplus holiness: holiness from *Tif'eret*, and surplus holiness from *Yesod*—the divine phallus and agent of union. On the significance of the name אתה (*attah*), you, as a name of *Malkhut*, see above, note 330. On the surplus, cf. *Zohar* 2:133a.

343. **And holy ones [praise you] every day…** The next phrase in the third blessing. The various celestial beings inhabiting the halls are sanctified by the surplus holiness stemming from *Yesod*, whereas the first holiness stemming from *Tif'eret* is for *Malkhut*.

344. **Blessed are You, *YHVH*, the holy God…** The conclusion of the third blessing. By the time that this conclusion is uttered, the *sefirot* are connected and aligned perfectly—from *Binah* through the fathers (*Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*) into *Malkhut*. The concluding phrase encapsulates this union: "You" denoting *Malkhut*, "*YHVH*" denoting *Tif'eret* (and *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*), and "God" denoting *Binah*. Containing the flow from *Binah* and the fathers, *Malkhut* is the bond and nexus of all.

The end of the third blessing marks a thematic break in the *Amidah*, as the prayers transition from praise to requests

and supplications (see BT *Berakhot* 34a). Hence: “until here: cleaving…,” since the first three blessings pertain to the unification of the *sefirot* and to the flow of *Binah* into the fathers and on to *Malkhut*. Additionally, the first three blessings pertain to halls five, four, and six—corresponding to Abraham (*Ḥesed*), Isaac (*Gevurah*), and Jacob (*Tif’eret*), respectively. See also *Nitsotsei Zohar*, ad loc., n. 4.

345. **From here on are found requests…** As noted, the fourth blessing in the *Amidah* begins the section of requests and supplications. The first request, however, is of a noble nature: “You endow the human being with knowledge (*da’at*) and teach insight (*binah*) to the mortal. Endow us from Yourself with wisdom (*ḥokhmah*), insight and knowledge. Blessed are You, *YHVH*, endower of knowledge.” By beginning with such a noble request, the petitioner displays his desire for God—and does not “fall away” from the sublime contents of the first three blessings to his own personal needs.

“The holiness of his Lord, in which the supernal holy name is crowned, the name of blessings and sanctifications” refers to *Tif’eret* and the divine name *YHVH*, the focus of the third blessing of the *Amidah*. Whereas in the realm of the *sefirot, Tif’eret* is symbolized by *YHVH*, in the corresponding sixth hall the name *Kuzu* presides.

The mysterious divine name כוזו (*Kuzu*) derives from יהוה (*YHVH*) and is attained by replacing each letter of the Tetragrammaton with the following letter in the alphabet. In *Zohar* 1:18b this name denotes *Malkhut*. (See 2:134a: “the letters of the female are transposed.”) See also Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 43. This name appears widely throughout the later Zoharic stratum known as *Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*.

Here the relationship between *Kuzu* and *YHVH* is equated with the relationship between female and male. The word כוזו (*Kuzu*) has the numerical value of 39, corresponding to the word טל (*tal*), “dew,” and it signifies the “dew of heaven”

(*Tif'eret*). As noted in *Nitsotsei Orot*, ad loc., the numerical value of the first letter of the first three words of the prayer אתה חונן לאדם (*Attah ḥonen le-adam*), "You endow the human being," is also 39.

The numerical equivalence between טל (*tal*) and כוזו (*Kuzu*)—signifying the female counterpart of *YHVH*—pertains because numerologies, calculation, and counting are associated with *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 1:46b: "Calculation of all is by the moon.... Numerologies... derive entirely from the mystery of the moon." See also *Zohar* 1:239a; 2:221b, 223a, 225b; 3:220b. See also BT *Sukkah* 29a: "Our Rabbis taught:... 'Israel counts by the moon.'" The Jewish calendar is primarily lunar (with regular adjustments to realign with the seasons) and thus can be seen as deriving from *Malkhut*, who is symbolized by the moon.

346. **disengage little by little...** The following blessings pertain to repentance, forgiveness, and redemption—and only then to more prosaic personal requests, namely health and healing, and prosperity.

347. **after he arranges this sequence...** One must not make requests until having completed the unification of the *sefirot*—which is accomplished through the first three blessings of the *Amidah*.

348. **fire links with water and water with fire...** Water and fire signify *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, as do south and north. East and west signify *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 1:42a (*Heikh*), 42b (*Heikh*); 2:24a–b.

349. **concatenated within...** The incorporation and ascent of the halls is also the incorporation and ascent of the kabbalist's soul.

See *Zohar* 1:218a, where the phrase "He made a request and it is has been granted" is applied to Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai.

350. **"Be favorable, *YHVH*, our God, toward Your people Israel"...** This blessing marks the beginning of the third and final section of the *Amidah*. The blessing continues:

“turn to their prayer and restore the service to the sanctum of Your House. Speedily accept the fire-offerings of Israel and their prayer with love and favor, and may the service of Your people Israel always be favorable to You.” With this prayer the kabbalist draws divine bounty into the third hall, associated with the *sefirah Netsaḥ*, and likewise with prophecy and vision. *Netsaḥ* and its partner *Hod* (the two “thighs” and also “knees”) are the “stands” that support *Tif’eret* (the “body”—more precisely, the torso).

The *ma’amadot* refers to the system by which the general public was represented at the Temple during the offering of the daily sacrifices. The country was divided into 24 districts, each of which sent a delegation of eminent Israelites to represent it at the daily offerings for one week every six months. These men were known as *anshei ma’amad*, “men of standing,” whose task was to stand by and observe the Temple ritual. These “standing men” would pray a prayer similar to the prayer of the *Amidah* cited above. See BT *Ta’anit* 26a, 27b.

As discussed above, *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are the source of prophecy, whereas their corresponding halls are the source of visions and dreams. Prophecy pertains to the divine name צבאות (*Tseva’ot*); and visions, to the mysterious name השתפא (*Hshtpa*)—the name derived through the א״ת ב״ש (*at bash*) system, in which the last letter of the alphabet is substituted for the first, the penultimate for the second, etc. On the complex that consists of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, prophecy, visions, and dreams, and the name *Tseva’ot*, see *Zohar* 2:257b, 258a (both *Heikh*); see also 2:247b–248a (*Heikh*). On this blessing of the *Amidah* and its association with *Netsaḥ*, see Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 46 (55); *ZḤ* 42a.

The phrase “body complete in all aspects” refers to the second and central section of the *Amidah*.

351. ***baraitot*** **return to Mishnah…** *Baraita* means “external” and refers to a Tannaitic tradition not included in the canonical Mishnah. Here *baraitot* refers to the *sefirot* of

Netsaḥ and *Hod*, located outside the sefirotic torso, as well as to their respective halls. Mishnah symbolizes *Malkhut*. "Blessed are You, *YHVH*, who restores His *Shekhinah* to Zion" concludes the aforementioned blessing, whereupon *baraitot*—the correlate of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* in the realm of the halls—are integrated into *Malkhut*. On *baraita* and Mishnah, see *Zohar* 2:257b–258a (*Heikh*).

In rabbinic literature, one bows instead at the beginning of the following blessing, *Modim*. On kneeling and other prayer postures in *Heikhalot*, see the additions to the halls of holiness, beginning at 2:262b below, page 173. See also 1:42b (*Heikh*), p. 33 and n. 69.

352. **We thankfully acknowledge…** The second-to-last blessing of the *Amidah*. On the second hall—which is associated with the *sefirah Hod*—as the locus of dreams, see *Zohar* 2:247b–248a (*Heikh*; above, page 75). See also 2:258a (*Heikh*). On the *Modim* blessing as correlated with *Hod*, see 2:169a; *ZḤ* 42a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 46 (55). The phrase "ascending to appear in dream apparition" may mean that such souls appear in people's dreams; though the phrase might also be construed as "ascending to be shown apparition of a dream."

353. **בם במוכן (*Bm Bmukn*)…** The name *Bm Bmukn* derives from *El Elohim*. It is attained by replacing each letter with its succeeding letter in the alphabet. In the realm of the *sefirot*, the name *El Elohim* pertains; and in the realm of the halls, the derived name *Bm Bmukn*. The sense of the proof-text from Joshua is not entirely clear. According to *Matoq mi-Devash*, it indicates that just as the name *YHVH* pertains to the sefirotic realm, so too the names *El Elohim*.

The clause "Here is a single mystery, for all thighs" apparently means that even though we say that dreams pertain to the second hall—which is associated with *Hod*—in fact dreams pertain to both *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. See *Zohar* 2:258a (*Heikh*; above, page 142); see *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The domain from thighs to knees is correlated with visions; the domain beneath the knees, with dreams.

"These blessings" apparently refer to the blessings that begin "Be favorable" and "We thankfully acknowledge."

354. **peace in the Family above, peace in the Family below…** The final blessing in the *Amidah* begins: "Grant peace." This blessing is associated with the lowest hall, in turn associated with the *sefirah Yesod*. In the *Zohar*, "peace" often designates *Yesod*.

See BT *Berakhot* 17a: "When Rav Safra concluded his prayer, he said as follows: May it be Your will *YHVH*, our God, to establish peace among the Family Above [i.e., angels, celestial princes] and among the family below [i.e., the sages]." Here, the "Family below" signifies the lowest hall when it is united with *Yesod*, the "Family Above." This union enables the divine flow to descend below.

On the blessing "Grant peace" and its association with *Yesod*, see *Zohar* 2:128b–129a, 169a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 46 (55).

355. **fulfilling the complete name…** The "complete name" is *YHVH Elohim*, designating the total unification of the sefirotic realm with the realm of the halls—in other words, the union of male and female. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3; *Zohar* 2:256b (*Heikh*; above, p. 129 and n. 242), 258b (*Heikh*); see also 1:45a (*Heikh*).

356. **son… of the King's palace…** See *Zohar* 2:57a. See also Idel, *Ben: Sonship and Jewish Mysticism*, 403–25. Upon completing the *Amidah*, a worshiper "takes leave" of the divine presence (and the halls) with the concluding wish "May He who makes peace in His heights," etc.

The word rendered as "palace" and "hall" is the same: *heikhal*.

357. **contemplators of His name…** The full verse from Malachi reads: *Then those who revere YHVH spoke with one another; and YHVH listened attentively, and a book of remembrance was written in His presence concerning*

those who revere YHVH *and contemplate* [or: *esteem*] *His name*. See *Avot* 3:2; *Zohar* 2:217a; 3:265a.

358. **Whoever does not consummate…** Whereas the kabbalist who unifies the upper realms is inscribed above, one who does not is recorded as childless. One who fails to unify the halls and the *sefirot* *robs his father and mother*, i.e., deprives the blessed Holy One and the Assembly of Israel—the male and female aspects of divinity, respectively—of sexual union and divine flow. On the verse from Proverbs, see *Zohar* 2:250a (*Heikh*; above, p. 89 and n. 107), citing BT *Berakhot* 35b.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 11b and *Qiddushin* 40a: "Whoever does not care about the glory [or: honor] of his Master, better for him had he not come into the world." See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:954.

359. מצפץ מצפץ **(*Mtspts Mtspts*)…** An encoded form of the name יהוה יהוה (*YHVH YHVH*), according to the system of letter substitution known א״ת ב״ש (*at bash*), in which the last letter of the alphabet is substituted for the first, the penultimate for the second, etc. See *Zohar* 1:20a; 2:92a (*Piq*), 132b. The double name יהוה יהוה (*YHVH YHVH*) appears at the beginning of the thirteen attributes of divine compassion (Exodus 34:6–7). See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17b. According to Kabbalah, these qualities originate in *Keter*, the highest *sefirah*—the realm of total compassion, untainted by judgment.

Following the worship leader's repetition of the morning *Amidah* is the *Taḥanun* (Supplication) prayer, in which the thirteen attributes of compassion (or mercy) are recited. According to the *Zohar* here, when recited in a quorum, the divine names *YHVH YHVH* are proclaimed and the attributes are recited normally; but when recited by an individual, the encoded name *Mtspts Mtspts* is used, and the attributes are recited according to the at *bash* method. Cf. Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Oraḥ Ḥayyim*, 565. The confession portion of *Taḥanun* is recited standing (see Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Oraḥ Ḥayyim*, 607). Hence one rises after the leader's repetition. See BT *Yoma* 87b. See also *Zohar* 3:120b.

“Open mouth” renders פטרא דפומא (*pitra de-fuma*), modeled after the Hebrew expression פתחון פה (*pitḥon peh*), “pretext, opportunity for fault-finding.” See *Zohar* 1:89a (*ST*); 2:14b (*MhN*), 41a (*Piq*); 3:296b (*IZ*).

360. ***Your father and mother will rejoice…*** Namely, the blessed Holy One (*Tif’eret*) and the Assembly of Israel (*Shekhinah*). On the verse from Proverbs, see *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*); 3:55a, 119a, 156a, 240b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 217, 349 (and Wolfson’s notes). In M *Ta’anit* 3:8, this verse is applied to Ḥoni ha-Me’aggel, who brought rain in a time of drought.

On abolishing decrees, see 2 Samuel 23:3: *The God of Israel has said, to me the Rock of Israel has spoken: He who rules humanity,* צדיק מושל יראת אלהים (*tsaddiq moshel yir’at Elohim*), *just, who rules* [*in*] *the awe of God*. According to a midrashic interpretation, the conclusion of the verse means: *The righteous one rules the awe of God*. See BT *Mo’ed Qatan* 16b, where Rabbi Abbahu conveys this sense of the verse and quotes God as saying: “I rule over humanity. Who rules over Me? The righteous one. For I issue a decree and he abolishes it.” See *Midrash Tanna’im*, Deuteronomy 33:1; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tavo* 1; *Devarim Rabbah* 10:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:20; *Zohar* 1:10a, 45b (*Heikh*); 2:15a (*MhN*); 3:15a, 242a. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 63a, *Bava Metsi’a* 85a; *Rut Zuta* 2:19; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:6; *Zohar* 1:209a; 3:68a.

On prayer as not returning unfulfilled, see Isaiah 55:11; BT *Berakhot* 32b; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:12; *Zohar* 1:43a, 45b (both *Heikh*).

361. ***a portion to her maidens…*** Filled with divine bounty, *Malkhut* bestows the flow on the halls (her maidens) and even to the Other Side (as explained in what follows).

The verse from Esther describes the continual stream of maidens coming to King Ahasuerus in the contest to be crowned queen. The following verse describes Esther, so

this verse is sometimes applied specifically to her and to the divine feminine, *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:106a, 202b; 3:220b.

On the verse from Proverbs, see *Zohar* 1:18a, 20b, 107a, 189a, 229b, 250a; 2:18b (*MhN*), 204b; 3:58b–59a, 249a. On Genesis 49:27, see 1:161b–162a, 247b–248a.

362. **confessed by that person…** Presumably referring to the confession in *Taḥanun*, following the *Amidah*. The Other Side needs its "share," so as not to interfere in the unification. See below, note 364.

363. **mystery of the goat…** The confession of sins after the *Amidah* serves the same function as the scapegoat offered to Azazel in the Yom Kippur ritual. See *Zohar* 1:64b, 138b, 142b; 2:184b–185a; 3:63a–64a, 102a.

Leviticus 16:21–22 read: *Aaron shall lay his two hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities of the Children of Israel and all their sins, according to all their offences, and he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it off in the hand of a man for the hour to the wilderness. The goat will bear upon itself all their iniquities to a remote region, and he shall send off the goat to the wilderness*.

364. **granting a share to the one who needs…** By providing a portion to the Other Side, one ensures that the demonic force will be occupied, assuaged, and deterred from interfering in the realm of holiness. Thus, both *the king* (the side of holiness) and *Haman* (the Other Side) come to *the feast*.

On this theme, see *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im* 1:3, 43c; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 158–59; *Zohar* 1:11a, 64a–65a, 89b (*ST*), 113b–114b, 138b, 145b, 174b, 190a, 210b, 247b; 2:33a, 111b, 130a, 141a, 152b, 154b, 157a–b, 169a, 181b, 184b–185a, 203b, 227a–b, 237b–239b, 242b, 255b (*Heikh*), 266b (*Heikh*), 269a, 271b (*Piq*); 3:60b, 63a–64a, 63a–b (*Piq*), 79b, 101b–102a, 202b–203a, 224a–b, 258b–259a; *ZḤ* 20c, 46c, 86b–c (*MhN, Rut*), 87b–c (*MhN,*

Rut); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 165–67; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 124–27; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:453–54, 3:890–95, 959.

The simple sense of the verses from Psalms is that treating one's enemy well actually ensures his subsequent torment or puts him to shame. See *Zohar* 1:174b; 2:185a; 3:102a, 259a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 167. Cf. *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 45; *Bereshit Rabbah* 54:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:1; and parallels.

365. **from within thought, desire of the heart, voice and word of lips…** Just as the descent of the divine flow passes from thought (*Ḥokhmah*) to desire (*Binah*) to voice (*Tif'eret*) and finally on to word (*Malkhut*), so the ascent of prayer must involve the perfect union of thought, desire, voice, and word—in order to effectuate peace (unification among the *sefirot*) on high. See *Zohar* 2:250a (*Heikh*; above, page 88); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:954. See also *Zohar* 1:99b–100a, 161a; 2:180b, 200b; 3:184a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:952–53.

"Perfect peace" renders שלמא (*shelama*), literally "peace," though some of the manuscripts read שלימו (*shelimu*), "perfection."

366. **a single chariot that *Shekhinah* might alight upon them…** Human psychological and physiological processes reflect (and thereby have the capacity to impact upon) the divine realm. By means of the kabbalist's prayer—aligning thought, desire, voice, and word—the halls are united and become a chariot and throne ("four supports") for *Shekhinah*.

367. **Thought engenders desire…** *Ḥokhmah* ("Thought") produces *Binah* ("Desire"), which in turn produces *Tif'eret* ("Voice"). Just as *Tif'eret* ascends to bind bonds and unite the extremities of the sefirotic realm, so its counterpart, human voice in prayer, draws blessings below and unites *Ḥokhmah*, *Binah*, and *Tif'eret*—which culminate in *Malkhut* ("Word").

On prayer “in a whisper,” see above, note 327.

368. **King Solomon offered prayer…** The following passage, extending until the end of the halls of holiness, is absent from Mantua, Cremona, *Or Yaqar*, and some of the manuscripts. It is, however, extant in five manuscript witnesses: CT1, V23, MS1, M3, and N47. See Wolski, “An Unpublished Conclusion.”

The verse from Kings describes the conclusion of Solomon’s prayer at the inauguration of the First Temple. On this verse, see JT *Berakhot* 1:4, 3c; BT *Berakhot* 34b, *Megillah* 22b, *Shevu’ot* 16b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 39:12; *Zohar* 3:24b, where *the altar of YHVH* signifies *Shekhinah*.

On the idea that the house above was arrayed when the house below was arrayed, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:12, in the name of Rabbi Simon: “When the blessed Holy One told Israel to erect the Dwelling [or: Tabernacle], He hinted to the angels that they too should construct a Dwelling. When it was erected below, it was erected above.”

See *Tanḥuma, Naso* 18; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5, 22b; *Zohar* 1:35a; 2:143a, 159a (standard editions), 235b, 239b–242b; 3:3b, 74b. On the heavenly and earthly temples, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 10; JT *Berakhot* 4:5, 8c; BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Tanḥutma, Vayaqhel* 7, *Pequdei* 1–3; *Shemot Rabbah* 33:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 30:1. On the various earthly and celestial Dwellings and Temples, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:869–78. Here the arraying of the Temple below arrays the sefirotic house above—aligning *Binah*, *Tif’eret*, and *Shekhinah*.

On prolonging prayer, see *Zohar* 2:244b, 259b–260a (both *Heikh*).

369. **kneeling on his knees…** As is explained below, the kneeling prayer posture pertains to *Tif’eret*, symbolized by “Heaven.” In dedicating the Temple, Solomon sought to fill *Tif’eret*, the divine male, with blessings from above, which in turn would descend upon the divine female, *Malkhut* (*Shekhinah*). Accordingly, he addressed heaven and spread his thighs and kneeled. Apparently, the spreading of the thighs

alludes to *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, which are the sefirotic thighs supporting the divine body (i.e., torso), *Tif'eret*.

In its simple sense, the phrase ואתה תשמע השמים (*ve-attah tishma ha-shamayim*), rendered here as *Hear You, O heaven* means *Oh hear, You in heaven*. The *Zohar* reads the verse hyperliterally, with Solomon addressing "Heaven," namely the *sefirah Tif'eret*. The phrase appears numerous times in Solomon's prayer in 1 Kings 8. On this phrase and on heaven as the blessed Holy One, see *Bahir* 68 (100). The second phrase, ושמעת השמים (*ve-shamatta ha-shamayim*), *Hear, O heaven*, is usually rendered *Oh hear in heaven*. Again, the *Zohar* opts for a hyperliteral reading.

370. **entire configuration of the First Temple pertains to Heaven…** Just as kneeling pertains to *Tif'eret* (Heaven), likewise Solomon's hands were also directed toward Heaven. Furthermore, his open palms mirrored the opening of the sefirotic realm, poised to pour forth divine bounty below from *Binah*—the source of all—on to *Tif'eret* and ultimately *Malkhut*.

Solomon's spread palms recall Moses' raised hand in the battle against Amalek. The full verse from Exodus reads: *When Moses would raise his hand, Israel prevailed; when he would let down his hand, Amalek prevailed*. Here, *Israel prevailed* alludes to the augmentation of *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el*, the rung of Moses.

See *Bahir* 92 (135), 94 (138); Naḥmanides on Exodus 17:11; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; *Zohar* 1:244b; 2:57a, 65b–66a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 57 (and Wolfson's n. 5), 254–55. Cf. M *Rosh ha-Shanah* 3:8. On the spreading of hands (or palms), see also *Zohar* 1:44b, 45a (*Heikh*).

On the difference between the Dwelling (the portable Tabernacle) erected by Moses and Solomon's Temple, see *Zohar* 2:241a, 242a. In the latter passage, the Dwelling (signifying *Shekhinah*) is understood as having been arranged by Moses (whose rung was *Tif'eret*), whereas the Temple was

constructed by Solomon—representing the river of *Yesod*, thereby granting greater satisfaction to *Shekhinah*.

Elsewhere in the *Heikhalot* the First Temple is depicted as corresponding to *Binah*. See *Zohar* 1:39b; 2:257b–258a (both *Heikh*). See also *Zohar* 2:9b.

371. **Kneeling… Prostration… Bowing with one's face…** These three prayer postures are correlated with *Tif'eret* ("Heaven"), *Binah* ("higher world," "chamber of the holy"), and *Malkhut* ("lowest rung," which receives the images of the higher *sefirot*) respectively. The "one who settles upon" Heaven refers to *Binah*. "Will of thought" signifies *Keter*, the will of *Ḥokhmah* (often designated as "thought"). *Binah* contains the flow of both of them. Together these three *sefirot* constitute the divine head or brain, and thus prostration with the head is directed to them.

In *Heikhalot Bereshit* these prayer postures are associated with various halls, though the schema here differs. See *Zohar* 1:42b (on kneeling), 43b (on prostration), 44a (on bowing with one's face to the ground), 44b (on prostration and spreading of hands), 45a (kneeling, prostration, bowing, spreading of palms, and falling on the face) (all *Heikh*).

On the various prayer postures, see BT *Berakhot* 34a–b; *Megillah* 22b; *Shevu'ot* 16b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:10, 12–14. See also Avraham Maimuni, *Sefer ha-Maspiq le-Ovdey Hashem*, 117–47.

On falling on the face (*nefilat appayim*), often associated with the *Taḥanun* (Supplication) prayer recited after the *Amidah*, see JT *Ta'anit* 2:4, 65d; *Avodah Zarah* 4:1, 43d; BT *Megillah* 22a–b, *Ta'anit* 14b, *Bava Metsi'a* 59b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:13–14; *Zohar* 2:129a, 200b, 202b; 3:120b–121a, 176b, 241b; *ZḤ* 42a–b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:969–71; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 474–85; Fishbane, *The Kiss of God*, 104–120.

Psalms 5:8 reads in full: *As for me, through Your abundant love I will enter Your house; I will prostrate at*

Your holy sanctuary in awe of You. See *Zohar* 1:11a where the verse is interpreted as follows: *"As for me, through Your abundant love I will enter Your house*—Abraham; *I will prostrate at Your holy sanctuary*—Isaac; *in awe of You*—Jacob." See also *Zohar* 3:8b. Though the phrase *I will prostrate at Your holy sanctuary* is associated with Isaac, signifying *Gevurah*, here the same phrase is interpreted as alluding to *Binah*, reading *holy sanctuary* as "chamber of the holy," namely *Binah*, chamber of *Ḥokhmah*; hence prostration correlates with *Binah*. According to a Spanish custom, this verse is to be recited upon entering the synagogue. See *Kolbo*, 87; David Abudarham, *Sefer Abudarham*, 349. See also Psalms 138:2.

372. **Whoever knows to sequence the arrangement of his Lord...** On the phrase "to sequence the arrangement," a key concept in the Zoharic *Heikhalot*, see *Zohar* 2:244b, 259b, 261b (all *Heikh*).

On first expressing praise before proceeding to prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 32a, in the name of Rabbi Simlai: "One should always array the praise of the blessed Holy One and then pray." In that statement, according to Rashi (on BT *Avodah Zarah* 7b, s.v. *yesadder adam*), "praise" refers to the first three blessings of the *Amidah*, while "prayer" refers to various requests that follow. See *Zohar* 1:169a, 243b; 3:195b, 260b, 285a. On the primacy of the first three blessings, see 2:261b (*Heikh*).

In rabbinic literature the phrase כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra'el*), "Assembly of Israel," nearly always denotes the people of Israel. The Midrash on the Song of Songs describes an allegorical love affair between the maiden (the earthly community of Israel) and her lover (the blessed Holy One). In the *Zohar, Keneset Yisra'el* can refer to the earthly community but also (often primarily) to *Shekhinah*—the divine feminine counterpart of the people, the aspect of God most intimately connected with them. The lovers in the Song of Songs are pictured as a divine couple, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

Thus the verse from Song of Songs alludes to *Shekhinah* embraced by *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, the divine right and left hands or arms, south and north respectively, through Her union with *Tif'eret*. On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:49a–b, 133a, 136a, 151a, 163b, 244a, 245a, 250a; 2:30a, 138b, 154b, 169b, 238b; 3:26a, 55a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 63.

In the daily morning liturgy, the blessing "Blessed are You, *YHVH*, who has redeemed Israel" immediately precedes the *Amidah*—the "standing prayer" that is so central that it is known simply as Prayer. It is considered meritorious to join the blessing of Redemption to the *Amidah* without any interruption or pause. Here, this joining symbolizes the union of the divine couple, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, which is consummated during the *Amidah*.

On the importance of joining Redemption to Prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 4b, 9b, 10b. On its kabbalistic significance, see *Zohar* 1:132b, 205b, 228b; 2:128b, 138b, 156a, 216b; 3:195b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 78–79; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 75–76 (96).

373. **Aspiration of prayer must ascend…** "Aspiration," "intention," and "desire" all render רעותא (*re'uta*). The opening sentence might also be construed: "Aspiration of prayer must ascend, binding Her above unto Infinity"—with "Her" signifying *Shekhinah*.

On the expression "unto Infinity," see *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*); 2:244b, 259b, 260b (all *Heikh*). See also 2:213b; Valabregue-Perry, *Ba-Nistar u-va-Nigleh*, 161–166.

On intention, see *Zohar* 1:99b–100a, 161a; 2:180b, 200b, 250a (*Heikh*), 262b (*Heikh*); 3:184a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:952–53.

The phrase "All is in mystery—revealed and secret" might mean that whereas the word (the words of prayer for example) is revealed, the mystical intention is secret.

374. ***crowning him with favor…*** The righteous who fulfill God's will [Aramaic: רעותא (*re'uta*)] are rewarded with

favor [Hebrew: רצון (*ratson*), also meaning "will"].

375. **Rabbi Shim'on opened...** Here begins the account of the seven halls of impurity, paralleling the halls of holiness. The shorter version of the *Heikhalot* found in *Parashat Be-Reshit* does not contain these halls. At the beginning of the halls of holiness in *Pequdei* (*Zohar* 2:245a; above, page 55), Rabbi Shim'on likewise begins by addressing Adam.

On Adam's failure to fulfill the one commandment with which he was enjoined—namely not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil—see *Bereshit Rabbah* 21:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 25:2; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 8. On the phrase "Who will uncover the dust from your eyes," see also M *Sotah* 5:2; Scholem, "Parashah Ḥadashah," 433; *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*). The sense of the phrase here is: would that you were still living to witness the effect of your actions!

On the verse from Hosea, see BT *Sanhedrin* 38b; Rashi, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:56a; 3:122a. The verse is cited in *Zohar* 1:38a, at the beginning of *Heikhalot Bereshit*.

As becomes clear below, the *serpent* signifies the demonic Other Side. On the verse from Genesis, see *Zohar* 1:35b, 49b, 52a; *ZḤ* 18c (*MhN*). On the wicked words or evil speech of the serpent in the Garden of Eden, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:4; 20:1–2; *Devarim Rabbah* 5:10; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 19; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 45; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:22; *Midrash Tehillim* 1:9; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:12; *Zohar* 2:148b; 3:46b.

376. ***there is but a step between me and death...*** In Kabbalah, David symbolizes *Malkhut*, whose realm borders the demonic realm of the Other Side. Even as David was banished from the holy land (signifying *Malkhut*) and descended from his rungs, he did not enter the Other Side.

The verse from Samuel is spoken by David to Jonathan. David's having been "banished" refers to his flight from King Saul. See 1 Samuel 19–21. On David outside the holy land, cf. BT *Ketubbot* 110b. See also *Zohar* 1:8b, where

David describes the gap separating himself from the Other Side as “a thread as fine as a filament of hair.”

The description of David’s being “thrust in the font of flowing waters” refers to David (*Malkhut*) as being rooted in the divine flow above. See *Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam*. Cf. the account of David and the primal waters of the deep in BT *Sukkah* 53a–b.

377. **seven names corresponding to the seven rungs of the halls…** The evil impulse and Hell each have seven names, which are bestowed in turn upon the seven halls of impurity.

See BT *Bava Batra* 16a: “Resh Lakish said, ‘Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same.” See also *Zohar* 1:35b, 52a, 178b, 202a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 394–5. On the writhing serpent, see Isaiah 27:1; *Zohar* 2:265a, 266a (both *Heikh*); *ZḤ* 18c (*MhN*).

On the seven names of the evil impulse, see BT *Sukkah* 52a: “Rabbi Avira, or some say Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi expounded, ‘The evil impulse has seven names. The blessed Holy One called it Evil…; Moses called it Uncircumcised…; David called it Impure…; Solomon called it Enemy…; Isaiah called it Stumbling Block…; Ezekiel called it Stone…; Joel called it Hidden One.’” See *Zohar* 1:18a; *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*), employing the same names as in the *Heikhalot* passage; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 42b.

On the seven names of Hell, see BT *Eruvin* 19a, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a: “Hell has seven names: Sheol, Ruin, Pit of Destruction, Tumultuous Pit, Miry Clay, Shadow of Death, and Netherworld.” See also *Midrash Tehillim* 11:6; *Zohar* 1:18a; *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*), employing the same names as in this passage; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 42b.

378. **just as there are rungs and halls on the Side of Holiness…** See *Zohar* 2:244a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:450–51.

379. **One who comes to purify himself…** See BT *Shabbat* 104a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "… If one comes to defile himself, he is provided an opening; if one comes to purify himself, he is given assistance." See also BT *Yoma* 38b–39a. "Mystery of Faith" may designate either *Malkhut* or more generally the side of holiness. See *Zohar* 1:54a, 56b, 62a, 76b, 88b, 169b, 198b; 2:50a, 125b; 3:47a, 207a.

380. **will not see death…** Namely, the Angel of Death. On seeing the Angel of Death just before departing the world, see BT *Avodah Zarah* 20b; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1; *Ḥibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 257–58; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150; *Zohar* 3:126b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 393. On the verse from Psalms, see *ZḤ* 91d (*MhN, Eikhah*).

381. **Twelve Months…** On the sentence of Hell as lasting twelve months, see M *Eduyyot* 2:10; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17a; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 3; *Zohar* 1:68b, 106b (*MhN*), 130b; 2:245b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 25b (*MhN*).

Apparently, the "twelve months" on the side of holiness allude to the twelve camps of angels or supernal powers that accompany *Shekhinah*. See *Matoq mi-Devash* for a different interpretation.

On the seven abodes of Hell, see BT *Sotah* 10b; *Midrash Tehillim* 11:6; *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:30, 35); *Zohar* 1:40a (*Heikh*), 62b, 237b; 2:150b; 3:178a, 285b–286a; *ZḤ* 25b (*MhN*), 79b (*MhN, Rut*); *Massekhet Geihinnom* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:149); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:20, n. 56. See also *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 53.

382. **First hall…** The counterpart of the first hall on the side of holiness, which corresponds to *Yesod* and *Malkhut*. Hence, this hall is an empty pit lacking support—as opposed to *Malkhut*, which is the well of living water and *Yesod*, the support of *Malkhut*. On the empty pit, see Genesis 37:24, describing the pit into which Joseph was thrown by his brothers. See also *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. *Zohar* 1:185a.

383. **Dumah… *Tohari'el*…** On Dumah's receiving the soul rejected by *Tohari'el*, see *Zohar* 2:245a–b (*Heikh*; above, page

59). On the angel *Tohari'el*, whose name derives from the root טהר (*thr*), "pure," see *Sidrei de-Shimmusha Rabba* (ed. Scholem), 123; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 268 (131); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 403; *Zohar* 1:40a (*Heikh*), 108a (*ST*); 2:245a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*). Cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §427.

דומה (*Dumah*), literally "silence," is a name for the netherworld in the Bible. See Psalms 94:17: *Were not YHVH a help to me, my soul would have nearly dwelled in dumah*. In rabbinic literature, Dumah is the angel in charge of the souls of the dead (BT *Berakhot* 18b, *Shabbat* 152b, *Ḥagigah* 5a, *Sanhedrin* 94a; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33). See *Zohar* 1:8a–b, 62b, 94a, 102a (*MhN*), 121a (*Tos*), 123b (labeled as *Tos*, but in fact *MhN*), 124a (*MhN*), 130b, 218b, 237b; 2:18a (*MhN*), 150b, 207a. Dumah also appears in the first abode of Hell in *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*). Dumah presides "above and below" because he is stationed here in the first hall of impurity, and because the third hall is named after him (see *Zohar* 2:264b).

"Wardens of judgment" renders גרדיני נימוסין (*gardinei nimusin*). *Gardinei* derives from the Castilian *guardián*, "guardian." See Corominas, *Diccionario*, 3:246–48.

384. **פתותי (*Fatoti*)...** A person's wandering eye is attributed to the activity of *Fatoti* and his minions, who—as his name suggests—seduces people to look upon inappropriate matters.

385. **smashes its eyes... they belong to him!** The eyes that fell victim to *Fatoti*'s seduction belong to him. On *Fatoti* as agent, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 17:6: "The heart and the eyes are the agents for the body." See also Rashi on Numbers 15:39 (*You shall not stray after your heart and after your eyes*): "The heart and the eyes are the spies for the body. They are its agents for sinning; the eye sees, the heart covets, and the body commits the transgression." See also *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:2.

On judgment or punishment of the grave, known as *ḥibbut ha-qever*, see 3 Enoch 28:10; *Ḥibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 258–61; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150–52; 5:49; *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Margaliot, par. 30; *Zohar* 1:185a, 225a; 2:151a, 199b, 211b; 3:53a, 126b.

386. **snakes and scorpions…** See *Targum Yerushalmi* on Genesis 37:24; *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:16; BT *Shabbat* 22a; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 2; *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*). Here, the "snakes and scorpions" signify forces of torment.

387. **גמגימא (*Gamgima*)…** The chief spirit of the first hall of impurity. The verse from Job alludes to *Gamgima* cryptically via the word *gam*. Thus *Gamgima* works with Satan, the ultimate impure spirit of all. On the verse from Job, see *Zohar* 2:32b; 3:231a. On the rejection of prayer in the first hall of holiness, see 2:245b (*Heikh*).

388. **a filthy word that a person utters…** See *Zohar* 2:249b (*Heikh*; above, page 86). "To taint the holy site" means to impair *Shekhinah*.

On the radical idea of weakening holy power or weakening God, see *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:33, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon: "When Israel enact the will of the Omnipresent, they strengthen heavenly power, as is said: *In God we generate strength* (Psalms 60:14). When Israel do not enact the will of the Omnipresent, they weaken, as it were, the great power above, as is written: *The Rock that bore you*, תשי (*teshi*), *you weakened* (Deuteronomy 32:18)." The word *teshi* derives from the root נשה (*nshh*), "to forget," and the simple meaning of the verse in Deuteronomy is: *The Rock that bore you, you forgot*. However, according to this midrashic meaning, the word means *you weakened*, based on the root תשש (*tshsh*), "to be weak." On this theme, see also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 319; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:12; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 25:1; *Zohar* 1:57b; 2:32b, 64a, 65b, 155b.

389. **objects that a person throws… in a fit of rage…** On the relation between anger and idolatry, see BT

Shabbat 105b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Nuri: "One who tears his garments in anger or breaks his vessels in anger, or scatters his money in anger—regard him as an idolator."

See also *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 3; Maimonides, *Commentary on the Mishnah, Avot* 2:9; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot De'ot* 2:3; *Zohar* 1:27b (*TZ*); 2:182a–b; 3:179a (*RM*), 234b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*); *TZ* 56, 89b; [Moses de León?], *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, 33; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1333–34. See also *Zohar* 3:43a.

The name *Safsirita* is attested in Cremona and Mantua. Other witnesses read טפסריניא (*Tafsarinya*).

390. **strayed after a foreign god and worshiped another god...** On the phrase "foreign god," see Psalms 81:10: *There shall be no foreign god* בך (*vekha*), *among you*—which can be read hyperliterally: *There shall be no foreign god within you*. On the hyperliteral reading of the verse as referring to the evil impulse, see JT *Nedarim* 9:1, 41b; BT *Shabbat* 105b; *Zohar* 2:182a, 243a; 3:106a–b; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*). On "another god," see Exodus 34:14.

391. **Second hall...** Just as the second hall of holiness is more concealed than the first, the second hall of impurity is darker than the first. Like its counterpart on the side of holiness, this hall also has three openings. See *Zohar* 2:246b (*Heikh;* above, page 67). On the names of the halls and the names of the evil impulse, see 2:263a (*Heikh*; above, p. 179 and n. 377). See also *ZḤ* 79c (*MhN, Rut*).

392. **fornicate with their hands...** Masturbation. On this idiom, see BT *Niddah* 13b ("committing adultery by hand"). In the world of the *Zohar*, masturbation is a heinous sin. See BT *Niddah* 13a–b; *Zohar* 1:56b–57a, 62a, 69a, 100b, 188a, 219b; 2:214b; 3:90a, 158a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 353; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 230; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1365–66.

On not seeing the *Shekhinah*, see BT *Niddah* 13b, in the name of Rabbi Ammi: "Whoever brings himself into the grip

of lustful fantasy is barred from the domain of the blessed Holy One."

"Spilling seed on the ground" refers to withdrawal, as exemplified by Onan in Genesis 38:9: *Onan knew that the seed would not be his and so when he came to bed with his brother's wife, he would waste* [*his seed*] *on the ground, so to give no seed to his brother*. See Onqelos, ad loc. In *Bereshit Rabbah* 85:5, this mode of sexual practice is described as "threshing within, winnowing without." The precise meaning of "eject seed unnaturally" is not clear, though presumably it refers to some forbidden sexual practice.

393. **Boiling Seminal Emission...** The phrase derives from BT *Gittin* 57a, where it describes Balaam's eternal punishment. Here it is the name of the aforementioned minions of *Astirya*. The drops of semen invigorate the powers of the Other Side, who subjugate the "covenant"—the *sefirah Yesod*, the divine phallus—to the demonic realm.

394. **discharging seed in animals...** On עריות (*arayot*), "forbidden sexual relations," and the prohibition on bestiality, see Leviticus 18. In his gloss to this passage, Scholem specified: "Sodomy."

395. ***Cup of Staggering...*** See *Zohar* 2:246b–247a (*Heikh*; above, page 68) in the description of the second hall of holiness. The wicked who had been sentenced to death drank the cup administered by the court through which their sins were absolved; as for the remainder of the wicked, they now imbibe from the Cup of Staggering.

See BT *Sanhedrin* 43a, in the name of Rav Ḥisda: "One who is being led out to execution is given a grain of frankincense in a cup of wine to benumb his senses, as is said: *Give strong drink to the hapless and wine to the embittered* (Proverbs 31:6)." See also *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 2; Radak on Isaiah 51:17.

Isaiah 51:17 reads: *Rouse, rouse yourself! Arise, O Jerusalem—you who from YHVH's hand have drunk the cup of*

His wrath, you who have drained to the dregs the qubba'at, *bowl—the cup of staggering*. See also ibid., 51:22. The phrase "the bitter day" derives from Amos 8:10.

All the witnesses read "prince called *Cup of Staggering*" though this would appear to be an error, for in the *Heikhalot* the halls' "princes" are never otherwise given such a name. Following Margaliot and other printed editions, I have emended "prince" to "cup."

396. **three bitter drops ooze…** See BT *Avodah Zarah* 20b: "In his [the Angel of Death] hand is a drawn sword with a bitter drop suspended. When the sick person sees him, he is frightened and opens his mouth. The angel flings the drop inside. From this drop he dies; from this drop he turns putrid; from this drop his face turns green." On the motif of three drops (as opposed to one as in the Talmudic account), see the description of the Angel of Death in *Ḥibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 258: "His knife has drops: from one [the person] dies, from one he turns putrid, from one his face turns green." See *Zohar* 2:267a (*Heikh*); 3:126b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 393. Cf. *Zohar* 1:148b (*ST*); 3:231b.

On *Ḥatsats*, see Proverbs 20:17: *Bread gained by fraud may be tasty to a man, but later his mouth will be filled with* חצץ (*ḥatsats*), *gravel*. On *Mar ha-mavet*, see 1 Samuel 15:32: *Samuel said, "Bring forth to me Agag king of Amalek!" Agag went to him with mincing steps, and he thought "Ah,* מר המות (*mar ha-mavet*), *death's bitterness, is turned away!"* On *Qubba'at*, "bowl, goblet," see Isaiah 51:17 cited in previous note.

397. **insert this holy covenant into another woman…** Namely, the covenantal sign of circumcision, into a non-Jewish woman.

The reference to an "alien god" may derive from Malachi 2:11: *Judah has broken faith; an abhorrent act has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has desecrated the sanctuary of YHVH, which He loves, and has*

married the daughter of an alien god. See also Psalms 81:10: *There shall be no foreign god among you, and you shall not bow to an alien god*. In the *Zohar*, the prohibition against bowing down to another god includes a warning not to lie down with a foreign woman.

See BT *Eruvin* 19a; *Zohar* 1:93a, 131b, 189b; 2:3b, 7a, 57b, 61a, 87b, 90a, 243a; 3:13b, 57b, 90a, 142a (*IR*), 266a; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 78c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 212–13; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51 (63).

The *Zohar*'s concern with sexual purity reflects the promiscuity prevalent in the Jewish community in thirteenth-century Castile. See Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51–54 (63–67); Baer, in *Zion* 2 (1937):31–33, 36–44; idem, *History*, 1:250–63; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1371–72; Assis, "Sexual Behavior in Medieval Hispano-Jewish Society."

On the images of the impure women subsequently defiling the spirit of the deceased, see BT *Sotah* 3b: "Rabbi Shemu'el son of Naḥmani said in the name of Rabbi Yonatan: 'Whoever performs one commandment in this world, it precedes him and goes before him to the world to come.... Whoever commits one transgression in this world, it clings to him and goes before him to the Day of Judgment....' Rabbi El'azar says, 'It attaches itself to him like a dog, as is said: *he* [Joseph] *would not heed her to lie by her, to be with her* (Genesis 39:10). *To lie by her*—in this world; *to be with her*—in the world to come.'" See also *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 8.

On *Sangadi'el*, see *Zohar* 2:248a, 264b (both *Heikh*). The reading *Sangadi'el* is found in *Or Yaqar*, Cremona, and Mantua. Other witnesses read סנגריאל (*Sangri'el*), [cf. Spanish *sang real*, "royal blood," and *san greal*, "Holy Grail"], on whom see Yakov Zvi Yules, *Sefer Qehilat Ya'akov*, entry סנ.

398. **semen that he discharged into animals...** On Balaam's bestial sorcery practices, see BT *Sanhedrin* 105a–b; *Avodah Zarah* 4b; *Zohar* 1:125b–126a; 3:207a; Moses de

León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 14–15 (18); idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 75. On his punishment in boiling semen, see BT *Gittin* 57a; *Zohar* 3:194b.

399. **false material** See BT *Berakhot* 55a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "Just as there cannot be wheat without straw, so there cannot be a dream without nonsense." According to BT *Berakhot* 55b, angels convey prophetic dreams, while demons convey false ones. See *Zohar* 1:83a, 130a–b, 183a, 199b–200a, 238a; 2:130a, 195b, 248a (*Heikh*), 267a (*Heikh*); 3:25a, 156b.

400. **were he not to convey a truthful matter…** Like the deceiver who combines truth with falsehood, so the demonic forces of this hall mingle their deceptions with words emanating from the holy side. See BT *Sotah* 35a; Rashi on Numbers 13:27; *Zohar* 1:2b; 2:215b; 3:161a.

401. **titillate human beings…** On demonic seduction, succubi, and incubi, see *Zohar* 1:19b, 54b–55a, 169b; 2:130a; 3:76b–77a; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 51–54; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 154–57; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1366–67. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 151b, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina: "One may not sleep alone in a house; and whoever sleeps alone in a house is seized by Lilith." Cf. *Tanḥuma*, (Buber), *Bereshit* 17. See also BT *Ketubbot* 46a. On spirits that are "sometimes male, sometimes female," see *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*; above, p. 43 and n. 96).

Later printed editions append a clarifying statement to this paragraph: "Likewise, to women they appear as men."

402. ***strange woman…*** The demonic Other Side. See *Zohar* 1:38b (*Heikh*).

403. **Third hall…** Just as the third hall on the side of holiness is more radiant than all the preceding and contains four openings (see *Zohar* 2:248a; above, page 77), so this hall is gloomier than the preceding halls of impurity and also contains four openings.

On the names of the halls and the names of the evil impulse, see *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*; above, p. 179 and n. 377) Dumah, literally “Silence,” designates the netherworld in the Bible. See Psalms 94:17: *Were not YHVH a help to me, my soul would have nearly dwelt in dumah*. Cf. Psalms 115:17. In rabbinic literature Dumah is the angel in charge of souls of the dead (BT *Berakhot* 18b, *Shabbat* 152b, *Sanhedrin* 94a). In the *Zohar* he retains this role and oversees Hell. On Dumah as a name of Hell, see *Midrash Tehillim* 11:6. See also *ZḤ* 79c (*MhN, Rut*).

404. **takes up weapons and stores them…** See BT *Bava Qamma* 60b: “Our Rabbis taught: ‘A plague in town? Keep your feet indoors.’… Our Rabbis taught: ‘A plague in town? One should not walk in the middle of the road because the Angel of Death walks there, for as soon as permission has been granted him, he strides brazenly.’… Our Rabbis taught: A plague in the town? One should not go alone to the synagogue because the Angel of Death stores his tools there.’” See *Zohar* 1:63a, 69a, 101b–102a, 107b, 182b, 197b, 204b; 2:36a; 3:54a–b; *ZḤ* 81c (*MhN, Rut*).

On the dangers of walking alone, see also M *Avot* 3:4; JT *Shabbat* 2:6, 5b; *Tanḥuma, Vayishlaḥ* 8; *Zohar* 1:69b, 169b, 230a; 2:205a. See also BT *Berakhot* 43b: “To one person, [a demon] shows himself and causes harm; to two, he shows himself but does not cause harm; to three, he does not show himself at all.”

405. ***Sangadi’el…*** See *Zohar* 2:248a (*Heikh*; above, page 78). Some witnesses read הנגדיאל (*Hangadi’el*).

406. ***Anagriyon…*** Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 112a, where the word אניגרון (*Anigron*), perhaps designating the name of a demon, appears in an incantation against thirst. On “trembling fever” and “fire in the bones,” see BT *Berakhot* 32a; *Gittin* 70a; *Kallah Rabbati* 1:18.

407. **Diphtheria, presiding over the killing of children…** See *Zohar* 2:248b (*Heikh*; above, p. 80 and n. 76). On Lilith (who is associated or identified with

Diphtheria) as variously playing and toying with, or laughing at victims, see also 2:96b, 111a; 3:77a, 234a.

Presumably, the awkward phrase “the woman of the child” means “mother of the child,” which is the wording found only in later editions. In his gloss on “mother of the child,” Scholem suggests that it alludes to the Arabic name for *Askara*, “*umm al-sibyan*,” literally “mother of lads,” a term referring to the female demon responsible for infant death.

408. ***Agirison…*** See *Zohar* 2:248b–249a (*Heikh*; above, p. 81 and nn. 78 and 79).

409. **Wrath and Rage…** See *Zohar* 2:249b (*Heikh*; above, p. 85 and n. 95).

The phrase “but do not trust him and are jealous of him” is a conjectural emendation. The manuscripts and first printed editions seem garbled here; they read: “but they trust him and are not jealous of him.” Cf. Margaliot, *Matoq mi-Devash, Sullam*, Edri.

410. **that they will be saddened and find no delight therefrom…** Wrath and Rage and their minions act to deprive one of the joy of fulfilling a commandment. See BT *Berakhot* 31a: “One should not stand to pray while immersed in sorrow or laziness or laughter or chatter or frivolity or idle talk, but only in the joy of [fulfilling] a commandment.”

The verse from Deuteronomy continues: *with which YHVH was furious with you to destroy you*.

411. **evil tongue… gossip…** Both of these render בישא לישנא (*lishana bisha*), “evil tongue; evil speech; gossip, slander.” On evil speech as arousing the demonic realm, see *Zohar* 3:46b–47a, 53a. Cf. Numbers 21:4–6; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 19; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:22. See *Zohar* 2:265b (*Heikh*; below, page 194).

On the general kabbalistic principle “arousal above depends on arousal below,” see *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 35b, 47b, 125a, 256b (*Heikh*); 3:31b, 40b, 47a, 47b, 92a–b, 105a,

110b, 112b, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144.

412. ***writhing snake, elusive snake…*** Signifying the demonic realm. See *Zohar* 2:266a (*Heikh*; below, page 195). Cf. 2:35a–b, 244b. The "scales" of the snake (and its "coat" of skin) are the forces through which it is active in the world.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *On that day YHVH will punish—with His fierce, great, mighty sword—Leviathan the elusive snake, Leviathan the writhing snake, and He will slay the dragon in the sea*. See also Job 26:12–13.

413. **Even though there is a fixed time…** According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 14, snakes shed their skin once every seven years. See also ibid., 34: "The voices of five [objects of creation] go from one end of the world to the other, and their voices are inaudible…. When the serpent sheds its skin, its voice goes from one end of the world to the other, and its voice is not heard." See *Zohar* 3:168b.

On the separation of the male snake from his partner, cf. BT *Bava Batra* 74b: "*God created the great sea serpents* (Genesis 1:21)…. Rabbi Yoḥanan said, 'This is Leviathan, the elusive snake, and Leviathan the writhing snake, as is said: *On that day YHVH will punish—with His fierce*, [*great, mighty*] *sword*—[*Leviathan the elusive snake, Leviathan the writhing snake*] (Isaiah 27:1).' Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav, 'Everything that the blessed Holy One created in His world, He created male and female. Even *Leviathan the elusive snake* and *Leviathan the writhing snake* He created male and female, and if they mated with one another, they would destroy the entire world. What did the blessed Holy One do? He castrated the male and killed the female, salting her for the righteous in the world to come, as is written: *He will slay the serpent of the sea* (ibid.).'" On Leviathan and his mate, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 1:21; Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Ma'amar al ha-Atsilut ha-*

Semalit, 262–63; *Zohar* 1:34b, 46b; 2:34a–b, 108b, 176b (*SdTs*), 244b; Idel, "Livyatan u-Vat Zugo."

414. **site called Pit…** See *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*; above, p. 182 and n. 386). On the serpent's cry, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34, cited in the previous note.

415. **holy tongue… Tongue of Holiness…** As "evil tongue" (gossip) stimulates the demonic forces, so words of Torah empower angelic potencies known as "holy tongue," who in turn stimulate *Malkhut*, who is described here as "Tongue of Holiness," insofar as She gives expression to "holiness above"—namely *Ḥokhmah*. On Tongue of Holiness as *Malkhut* and *Ḥokhmah*, see *Zohar* 3:61a. On Hebrew as Holy Tongue, see Naḥmanides on Exodus 30:13.

"Holiness above and holiness below" may indicate *Binah* and *Malkhut* respectively.

416. **first waters, upper waters… lower waters, called final waters…** See BT *Berakhot* 53b: "*Sanctify yourselves*—these are the first waters; *and be holy*—these are the final waters; *for holy* (ibid.)—this is oil; *am I, YHVH your God* (Leviticus 20:7)—this is blessing."

"First waters" refer to the laving of hands before eating; "final waters" to washing one's hands with "fingerbowl water" after the meal.

Here, first waters are associated with "upper waters," the flow of bounty originating in *Binah* through the divine masculine below into *Malkhut*, whereas final waters are associated with "lower waters," the arousal of the divine feminine to the masculine. Food is "in the middle" insofar as the meal comes between both waters, though it is understood here more symbolically as designating the fruit of union between the masculine and feminine. Ultimately, "food" derives from the upper waters—from the upper reaches of the sefirotic realm.

On "final waters" (or "fingerbowl water"), see also *Tosefta Berakhot* (Lieberman) 5:13; BT *Eruvin* 17b, *Ḥullin* 105a–106a; *Tanḥuma Balaq* 15; *Tanḥuma Balaq* (Buber) 24;

Rashi, s.v. *she-melaḥ sedomit yesh* and Tosafot, s.v. *mayyim aḥaronim ḥovah* on *Eruvin* 17b; idem on *Ḥullin* 105a, s.v. *mayyim rishonim*; Maimonides, *Hilkhot Berakhot* 6:3; 7:12; *Zohar* 2:154b, 169a, 266b (*Heikh*; below, page 200); 3:186b, 246a (*RM*), 273b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 86d, 87b–c (*MhN, Rut*); Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 87; Baḥya ben Asher, *Shulḥan Shel Arba*, 463, 475–6; Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 181; Joseph Caro, *Shulḥan Arukh* 181:1; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 62, 80–87.

The phrase "holy ones of the Most High" derives from Daniel 7:18–27, where it refers to Israel. Here it designates the kabbalists.

417. **Fourth hall...** The fourth hall of holiness is known as זכות (*Zekhut*), "Merit," which also means "innocence" in a forensic context. See *Zohar* 2:251a (*Heikh*; above, page 94); 1:43b (*Heikh*). Its counterpart is therefore the Hall of Guilt. The Hall of Guilt also appears in 2:6a.

On the names of the halls and the names of the evil impulse, see 2:263a (*Heikh*; above, p. 179 and n. 377). See also *ZḤ* 79c (*MhN, Rut*). On Miry Clay, see Psalms 40:3.

418. **they are weighed together...** If merits outweigh sins, the side of holiness prevails; conversely, if sins outweigh merits, the Other Side prevails.

On weighing sins and merits, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 3:1–4, and see next note. Cf. BT *Qiddushin* 40a–b. On the verse from Ecclesiastes, see BT *Ḥagigah* 15a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:14. See *Zohar* 2:252a (*Heikh*).

419. **inscribed for either life or death...** See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "Three books are opened on Rosh Hashanah: one for the completely wicked, one for the completely righteous, and one for those between. The completely righteous are immediately inscribed and sealed for life. The completely wicked are immediately inscribed and sealed for death. Those in between remain pending from Rosh Hashanah

until Yom Kippur. If they prove worthy, they are inscribed for life; if not, for death." See also *Zohar* 2:33b; 3:100b; *ZḤ* 20c.

420. **other gods…** Demonic forces. "Other gods" appears in Exodus 20:3 and frequently.

421. **אל (*el*), god, corresponding to the other one in the side of holiness…** Namely, the spirit *Zekhut'el* in the fourth hall of holiness. See *Zohar* 2:251a–b (*Heikh*; above, page 94).

Alien god derives from Deuteronomy 32:12; Malachi 2:11; Psalms 81:10.

422. **Boiling צואה (*Tso'ah*), Excrement, as is written: 'צא (*Tse*), *Out!' you will call to it…*** See *Zohar* 2:252a (*Heikh*; above, p. 98 and n. 139) in the description of the fourth hall of holiness. Here, the phrase from Isaiah is construed as *'Out!' you will call to him*, i.e., "Get out of the study house!"

423. **Scaly Plague… defile all those masters of evil tongue…** "Scaly Plague" renders נגע צרעת (*nega tsara'at*); alternatively, "scaly affliction." On the term *tsara'at*, often translated imprecisely as *leprosy*, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:774–76, 816–26.

See Leviticus 13:2–3: *If a person has on the skin of his body an inflammation or a rash or a shiny spot and it becomes a scaly affliction on the skin of his body, he shall be brought* [or: *it shall be reported*] *to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. The priest shall examine the affliction on the skin of his body, and if the hair in the affliction has turned white and the affliction seems deeper than the skin of his body, it is scaly affliction; when the priest sees it, he shall declare him impure*.

On evil speech as causing scaly affliction, see Numbers 12:10; *Tosefta Nega'im* 6:7; *Sifra, Metsora* 5:7, 73a; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 275; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 24:9; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer*, 9, pp. 172–75; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 9; B, 16; JT *Sotah* 2:1, 17d; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 16:1–7; 17:3;

18:4; BT *Shabbat* 97a, *Arakhin* 15b–16a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 5:5; *Devarim Rabbah* 6:8, 10; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 23, *Metsora* 1–2, 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 20, *Metsora* 1–7, 10; *Midrash Tehillim* 52:1; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:13; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 7:5; *Zohar* 2:122a; 3:46b–47a, 53a, 183b, 206a–b. Many of these sources interpret המצורע (*ha-metsora*), *the one afflicted with scales*, according to the method of *notariqon* (shorthand) as המוציא רע (*ha-motsi ra*), "the one who utters evil," or המוציא שם רע (*ha-motsi shem ra*), "the one who defames a person."

On *Nega*, see *Zohar* 2:252b (*Heikh*) in the description of the fourth hall of holiness. On "evil tongue," see 2:264b–265a (*Heikh*; above, page 189) in the description of the third hall of impurity.

424. ***Nega* is appointed over all tables...** See *Zohar* 2:252b (*Heikh*; above, pp. 102–3 and nn. 148 and 150) in the description of the fourth hall of holiness.

425. **[holiday] meals follow this pattern** See *Zohar* 3:94a.

426. **children, life, and sustenance inversely...** See *Zohar* 2:252b (*Heikh*; above, pp. 103–4 and n. 153) in the description of the fourth hall of holiness.

427. **אריריא (*Arirya*)...** The name is connected here with the root ארר (*'rr*), "to curse; damn." Curses are seized by demonic forces that activate Leviathan to arouse curses of his own.

On the danger of cursing oneself, see *Zohar* 1:14b; 3:155b, 246a (*RM*). Cf. M *Shevu'ot* 4:13; BT *Shevu'ot* 36a. On the demonic effects of wrong or evil speech, see BT *Berakhot* 19a; *Zohar* 1:175a, 195b; 2:47b; 3:46b, 47a, 53a, 85a, 155b. On arousing *the writhing snake*, see 2:265a (*Heikh*; above, page 190).

In chapter 3, Job curses the day of his birth. Verse 8 reads: *Let the day-cursers damn it; those skilled to stir Leviathan*. The *Zohar* connects לוטין (*levvatin*), "curses," with the similar-sounding לויתן (*livyatan*), "Leviathan."

428. **Job cursed himself…** Job's curse arouses the day-cursers. On the Day-Cursers as presiding over moments and hours, cf. the description of Balaam in BT *Berakhot* 7a, where his sorcerous power is described as knowing how to tap the one moment of divine anger each day.

In place of ומתוקפוי (*u-me-toqpoi*), "and from its power," some witnesses read ומתסקופי (*u-me-tasquppei*), "and from [its] ploys" or "from false accusations." See *Targum Onqelos*, Deuteronomy 22:14; Radak on Judges 14:4; *Zohar* 1:169b, 179b; 2:65a; 3:172b, 266b; *ZḤ* 18d (*MhN*).

429. **Fifth hall…** Whereas the fifth hall of holiness is called אהבה (*Ahavah*), "Love," its counterpart on the side of impurity is known as איבה (*Eivah*), "Enmity." Like the Hall of Love, this hall also has one opening and one prince above it. However, whereas the prince in the Hall of Love acts as Israel's advocate, the prince here acts as accuser. See *Zohar* 2:253a (*Heikh*; above, pages 104 and 105).

On the mystery of the foreskin, see *Zohar* 2:244b, 258a (*Heikh*; above, pages 139 and 141). On foreskin and the demonic realm, see also 1:13a, 18a, 35b, 91b, 103b; 3:44a–b (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (68); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 13a. On *Eivah*, see *Zohar* 2:111a (standard printed editions).

On the names of the halls and the names of the evil impulse, see above, *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*; above, p. 179 and n. 377). See also *ZḤ* 79c (*MhN, Rut*).

The verse from Genesis continues: *and between your seed and her seed. He will strike you at the head, and you will strike him at the heel*. This constitutes the conclusion of the divine curse delivered to the serpent.

430. שודד **(*Shoded*)…** Meaning "bandit, robber." The name of the spirit שודד (*Shoded*) might be interpreted as the counterpart of the "breasts" [Heb. singular שד (*shad*), דד (*dad*)] of the fifth hall of holiness. See *Zohar* 2:253a (*Heikh*; above, page 107).

The phrase *wrack and ruin* appears in Isaiah 59:7, 60:18; Jeremiah 48:3; cf. Isaiah 51:19.

On the connection between Sheol and pillaging in mountains, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 43 and Luria's note 44. On *the flame of the ever-turning sword*, see *Zohar* 1:44a; 2:253a (both *Heikh*) in the description of the fifth hall of holiness, where the phrase designates forces of judgment. See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 21:9: "*Ever-turning*—changing: sometimes male, sometimes female; sometimes spirits, sometimes angels." See also BT *Yoma* 75a, where demons are said to "turn many colors."

431. ***You will laugh at plunder and famine…*** See *Zohar* 2:253b (*Heikh*; above, page 108) in the description of the fifth hall of holiness.

432. **driving these two spirits away…** The significance of the verse from Job is now apparent. The virtuous have the capacity to banish these two spirits; hence they can laugh at them.

On the charitable practices of the nations who perform kindness only that they might be made strong—and so subjugate Israel—see BT *Bava Batra* 10b: "Rabban Yoḥanan son of Zakkai said to his disciples, 'My sons, what is the meaning of the verse: *Charity exalts a nation, but kindness is a sin for the peoples* (Proverbs 14:34)?' Rabbi Eli'ezer answered and said, '*Charity exalts a nation*—Israel, as is written: *Who is like your people Israel a unique nation on earth*? (1 Chronicles 17:21). *But kindness is a sin for the peoples*—all the charity and kindness performed by the peoples of the world [i.e., the heathens] is counted to them as sin, because they do it only to magnify themselves, as is said: *That they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and of his sons* (Ezra 6:10)….' Rabbi Eli'ezer ha-Moda'i says, '… All the charity and kindness performed by the peoples of the world is counted to them as sin, for they do it only to vilify us….'" See also *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 2:5; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 5.

433. ***they made me guardian of the vineyards…*** The verse is interpreted as being spoken by *Shekhinah*, who laments the fact that through Israel's disdain for kindness, and the other nations' practice of kindness, She nourishes the nations (*vineyards*) rather than Israel (*my own vineyard*). See *Zohar* 3:45b, 59b, 119b, 209b; *ZḤ* 69d (*ShS*).

434. **Foreskin, Clippings of Foreskin, Branches of Foreskin…** People who delay the circumcision of their sons, or who do not wait three years before eating new fruit ("the years of foreskin"), are subject to various demonic forces—all called Foreskin. Zipporah acted to avert this demonic danger when she circumcised her son.

See Exodus 4:24–26: *At an encampment on the way, YHVH encountered him and sought to kill him. Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and touched it to his feet, and she said, "Yes, a bridegroom of blood you are to me." He let him go. Then did she say, "A bridegroom of blood by the circumcising."* Commentators are divided over the identity of the intended victim: Moses, or his son.

On this extraordinary biblical narrative, see *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 1; *Targum Yerushalmi*, ad loc.; *Shemot Rabbah* 5:8; BT *Nedarim* 31b–32a; JT *Nedarim* 3:14, 38b; *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 4:24; Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and Baḥya, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:93b; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, ad loc., nn. 137, 143.

See BT *Nedarim* 32a, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Biznah: "When Moses our Master neglected circumcision, Wrath and Rage came and swallowed him up, leaving only his feet [a euphemism for phallus]. Immediately, *Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin*. Immediately, *He let him go*."

The term ערלה (*orlah*), "foreskin," also pertains to fruit. According to Leviticus 19:23, a tree's fruit must not be eaten during the first three years of growth: *When you come to the land and plant any fruit-bearing tree, you shall*

treat its foreskin with its fruit as foreskin [or: *you shall leave its fruits uncircumcised*]. *Three years it shall be foreskin* [or: *uncircumcised, forbidden*] *to you; it shall not be eaten*. See *Zohar* 2:244b.

Gezar Dinnaya means "sentence, verdict, decree."

435. **Sheol and Avadon...** In the Bible, שאול (*she'ol*) is the underworld, abode of the dead—sometimes paired with אבדון (*avaddon*), "destruction, ruin," which may refer to a distinct area of the underworld reserved for the wicked. According to rabbinic tradition, there are seven divisions of Hell, two of which are Sheol and Avadon (see above, note 377). On Avadon, see Proverbs 15:11; Job 26:6; and Revelation 9:11, where Avadon is the name of *the angel of the bottomless pit*.

436. **for this entire hall** is enmity See *Zohar* 2:266a (*Heikh*; above, page 195). The spirit injecting hostility is the counterpart of the various forces in the fifth hall of holiness that "convey love between Israel below and the blessed Holy One above" (see 2:253b; above, page 108). The spirit is named below.

437. ***two-edged sword*** Alluding to the two worlds in which the seduced die: this world, and the world to come. See *Midrash Mishlei* 5:4. Proverbs 5 warns against the wiles of the adulteress, here symbolizing the demonic feminine. Verse 3 reads: *For the lips of a strange woman drip honey; her palate is smoother than oil*.

On Proverbs 5:4, see *Zohar* 2:267a (*Heikh*; below, page 202) in the description of the sixth hall of impurity. See also 2:244a.

438. **אפרא (*Afra*)... ash of ashen cinders...** Standard print editions read אפרירא (*Afrira*). See *Zohar* 1:9b, which mentions *Afrira*, though there the name is spelled עפרירא (with an *ayin* rather than an *alef*). Here the name *Afra* (with an *alef*) derives from אפר (*efer*), "ash," rather than עפר (*afar*), "dust," though the *Zohar* readily connects the two terms. (So

already Genesis 18:27; Job 30:19; 42:6.) Unlike fruitful *dust of gold*, signifying *Malkhut, Afra* is barren.

The verse from Numbers describes the purification ritual required by a person (or object) that has come into contact with the dead. The dust from the purification offering was mixed with water and then sprinkled on the person (or object) with hyssop. According to the *Zohar*, the verse contains two secrets: firstly, the spirit *Afra* is included in this *ḥattat*, "purification offering," which pertains to the primordial snake—it is the dust of the offering; and secondly, one who performs *ḥattat*, "a sin," energizes the demonic dust. See Genesis 4:7: *At the opening ḥattat, sin, crouches*.

On *Malkhut* as dust, see *Zohar* 1:49a, 170a, 249b–250a; 2:23b–24a; 3:34b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 344–45; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 171; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 57–58, 62, 93–96 (70–71, 77–78, 118–22). On *dust of gold*, see *Zohar* 1:249b–250a; 2:24a; 3:34b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 344.

The context in Job 28 is the process of mining metals; the full verse reads: *A place whose stones are sapphire and that has dust of gold*. See *Zohar* 1:170a, where ash symbolizes Lilith, the demonic feminine: "Ash, residue of fire, never generating fruit; dust, yielding all fruit, totality of above and below." See also 1:80a (*ST*); 2:254b (*Heikh*; above, page 116).

439. **This [spirit] is included in *the bitter curse-conveying waters*...** Just as the spirit *Afra* is included in the purification offering, so too is it included in the water imbibed by the suspected adulteress.

Numbers 5:11–31 contains the law relating to a wife suspected of adultery. In such a case, the suspicious husband brings his wife to the sanctuary [Dwelling or Tabernacle], where she undergoes a trial by ordeal. The priest makes her drink a potion consisting of sacred water to which have been added dust from the sanctuary floor

and a parchment containing a curse (whose written letters dissolve in the water). The curse spells out the consequences: if she is guilty, her genital area will distend and she will be unable to conceive. If, however, the water has no effect on her, she is declared innocent and she will be blessed with seed. See Milgrom, *Numbers*, 37.

According to the *Zohar*'s reading here, whereas the Dwelling symbolizes *Malkhut*, "floor" signifies the realm of the halls beneath. The *dust that is on the floor of the Dwelling* (Numbers 5:17) thus implies the demonic forces beneath *Malkhut*. On the significance of that dust, see *Zohar* 3:125a. Cf. 2:6a, where the *bitter curse-conveying waters* are located in the Hall of Guilt. See also 1:80a (*ST*).

The *bitter curse-conveying waters* located in the fifth hall of impurity are the counterpart of the *many waters* (Song of Songs 8:7) in the fifth hall of holiness. See *Zohar* 2:253b (*Heikh*; above, page 109). The phrase *woman of whoredom* derives from Hosea 1:2.

440. **final waters are חובה (*ḥovah*), an obligation…** See BT *Ḥullin* 105a, in the name of Rabbi Yitsḥak son of Ashyan: "The first waters [i.e., washing the hands before the meal] are מצוה (*mitsvah*), a meritorious act; and the last [waters, i.e., washing after the meal] are חובה (*ḥovah*), an obligation."

In the continuation of the Talmudic discussion (105b), Abbaye notes, "At first I thought the reason why the last washing may not be performed over the ground was that it made a mess; but now my Master has told me: It is because an evil spirit rests upon it."

Here, the *Zohar* plays with Hebrew *ḥovah*, "obligation," and Aramaic *ḥovah*, "sin, guilt." This dirty water is offered to the sinful Other Side to satisfy and appease him—and prevent him from dominating.

On first waters and final waters, see *Zohar* 2:265a (*Heikh*; above, p. 191 and n. 416) in the description of the third hall of impurity. See especially 2:154b; 3:186b; *ZḤ*

87b–c (*MhN, Rut*). On assuaging the Other Side, see above, note 222.

"Supernal pure waters" indicates the flow from *Binah*, corresponding to "first" or "upper" waters—as opposed to "final" or "lower" waters, which stem from *Malkhut*.

441. **Sixth hall...** Just as the sixth hall of holiness is distinct from the preceding halls and marks the site where unification begins, so this hall is supreme above all. On the names of the halls and the names of the evil impulse, see *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*; above, p. 179 and n. 377). See also *ZḤ* 79c (*MhN, Rut*).

442. **a conjoined house...** The verse from Proverbs alludes to the unification of the four openings of the hall. The full verse reads: *Better to live on a corner of the roof than a contentious woman in a shared* [or: *spacious*] *house*. See also Proverbs 25:24.

On the four openings (and directions) of the sixth hall of holiness, see *Zohar* 2:253b (*Heikh*; above, page 110).

443. **wicked kisses...** Whereas the sixth hall of holiness contains the mystery of "kisses" and "lips," the corresponding hall of impurity contains "wicked kisses" and the *lips of a strange woman*. See *Zohar* 2:253b–254a (*Heikh*). See also 2:258b (*Heikh*).

444. ***Do not lust for her beauty...*** The verse from Proverbs describes *the woman of evil*, which in the *Zohar* personifies the demonic realm.

445. **Here hang all worldly desires...** See *Zohar* 2:258b (*Heikh*; above, page 144). Like the *woman of evil* in the preceding paragraph, the woman *decked out like a harlot* also personifies the demonic realm. Cf. 1:148a–b (*ST*). The encounter with the harlot described in Proverbs 7 is expounded for the remainder of the description of this sixth hall of impurity. As the sixth hall of holiness (corresponding to the *sefirah Tif'eret*) is the totality of the halls beneath it, so too this hall.

446. **descends and seduces, ascends and accuses…** The demonic harlot "abides-not-abiding" insofar as she descends to seduce and then ascends to accuse. Compare Satan's itinerary in BT *Bava Batra* 16a: "He descends and seduces, ascends and arouses wrath, obtains authorization and seizes the soul." See Rashi on BT *Shabbat* 89a, s.v. *ba ha-satan*; *Zohar* 1:10b, 46b, 125a, 148a (*ST*), 190a; 2:33b, 196a, 268b (*Heikh*).

447. **sword in hand, three drops within…** See *Zohar* 2:264a (*Heikh*; above, p. 185 and n. 396) in the description of the second hall of impurity. On the demonic harlot's kisses and transformation into a body of fire, cf. *Zohar* 1:148a (*ST*).

Proverbs 5:3 reads in full: *For the lips of a strange woman drip honey, and her palate is smoother than oil*. See *Zohar* 2:203b, 244a. On Proverbs 5:4, see 2:266b (*Heikh*; above, page 198) in the description of the fifth hall of impurity.

448. **he flings it into the person's mouth…** In this paragraph the pronoun "he" refers to the Angel of Death, who is the harlot transformed. On the drops penetrating the gut, cf. *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16: "… the evil impulse in his intestines"; *Zohar* 1:52a.

449. **soul departs with great difficulty…** One who cleaves to the Other Side during life endures a more difficult and painful death.

"With great difficulty" renders בפיטורי (*be-fiturei*), an ambiguous word deriving from an ambiguous phrase in BT *Berakhot* 8a, where כפיטורי בפי ושת (*ke-fiturei be-fi veset*), "like the gushing water at the entrance of a canal," describes death by diphtheria. Some understand the phrase to denote ropes being pulled through loop-holes in the boards of a ship. See Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *ke-fiturei be-fi veset*. Whatever the precise meaning, the phrase describes the pangs of a painful death. In the Talmudic passage, such painful death is contrasted with death by divine kiss. See Jastrow, 1161. See also BT

Mo'ed Qatan 28b–29a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Miqqets* 15. See also *Zohar* 2:256a (*Heikh*; above, page 128) in the description of the sixth hall of holiness.

450. **grooming and curling** Vanity is associated with the demonic realm. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 22:6, in the name of Rabbi Ammi: "The evil impulse does not walk on the side, but in the middle of the street; and when he sees a person painting his eyes, smoothing his hair, swinging his heel, he says, 'This one is mine!'" See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 87:3; *Zohar* 1:189b, 190b.

451. **another prince, which that other prince causes a person to arouse...** Apparently meaning that the activities of *Seqatofa* (which rouse a person to vanity) in turn arouse another demonic force, *Asirta*. The impulse to look upon oneself in the mirror also hails from the Other Side.

On *Asirta*, cf. *Zohar* 3:234b. On dreams and their deceptions, see *Zohar* 2:264a (*Heikh*; above, p. 186 and n. 399) in the description of the second hall of impurity.

452. **Lilith, mother of demons...** Gazing into a mirror has catastrophic effects, by arousing the spirit *Asirta*, who in turn arouses a second spirit—who in turn arouses Lilith, associated with *Askara*, "Diphtheria."

On Lilith, see *Alfa Beita de-Ven Sira*, ed. Yassif, 231–34, 289–90; *Zohar* 1:14b, 19b, 34b, 122a–b, 131b, 148a–b (*ST*), 190b, 204a; 2:60b–61a, 96a–b, 231b, 242b–244a; 3:19a, 69a, 76b–77a, 224a–b, 231b, 266a; *ZḤ* 16c (*MhN*); Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 36–37; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 235–41; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:464–65, 531; Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*, 221–54; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 356–61; Hutter, "Lilith"; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 120–22. On *Askara*, see *Zohar* 2:248b (*Heikh*; above, p. 80 and n. 76).

"Falling to the ground" may allude to epileptic seizures, which were thought to be brought on by certain phases of the moon. See Scholem. See *Zohar* 3:77a.

On the general kabbalistic principle of “arousal below,” see note 411.

453. ***I had to make sacrifices of well-being…*** The verse from Proverbs marks the beginning of the temptress’s speech of seduction to the lad devoid of sense. She informs him that, having just offered sacrifices (which have produced much meat for consumption), she has a rich banquet in store. See Leviticus 7:16.

Well-being renders שלמים (*shelamim*), whose precise meaning is uncertain and which may imply “well-being, peace, greeting, repayment.” See Levine, *Leviticus*, 15; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:204, 217–25.

Here *shelamim* is connected with *shalom*, “peace,” and its unusual inflection in the plural (the suffix *-im*) is explained as pointing to its capacity to generate peace above and below, the left in harmony with the right. These sacrifices are thus “for me”—for the Accuser, to pacify her.

On *shelamim* and *shalom*, see *Tosefta Zeyaḥim* 11:1; *Sifra, Nedavah* 16:1, 13a; *ḥovah* 4:2, 18c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 9:9; *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 1, *Tsav* 4, 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tsav* 10; *Zohar* 3:11a, 12b.

454. **As for me—since the day you were born…** The evil impulse appears from the moment of birth; the good impulse, from the age of thirteen (as signified by *on a long journey*).

See Genesis 8:21; BT *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Berakhot* 61a; *Qiddushin* 30b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16; B, 16, 30; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:13; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:5; *Zohar* 1:78a–79a (*ST*), 110b (*MhN*), 165b, 179a; 2:72b (*RR*), 97b–98a, 113a; *ZḤ* 10c, 24b (both *MhN*).

On the temptress’s question “If now you do not delight yourself, then when?” cf. Hillel’s famous statement in M *Avot* 1:14: “If not now, when?”

455. ***A bundle of desire he took with him…*** The phrase *tseror ha-kesef* means “bundle (or bag) of money,” though the *Zohar* is reading כסף (*kesef*), “money,” as “desire,

longing”—another sense of the same root. Presumably, the subject “he” refers to the man cited in the previous verse, in which case the referent is the good impulse—which departs from a person while he delights in the world, returning on the day of judgment, Rosh Hashanah. Cf. *Matoq mi-Devash*, who understands the subject of the opening verse to be the evil impulse—which ascends empowered by a person’s desire, and leaves a person to their own evil devices.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *Blast the ram’s horn on the new moon, ba-keseh, on the full moon, for our festival day.* The rare word *ba-keseh* (and *ha-kese*) apparently means *on the full moon*, but in rabbinic literature it is derived from the root כסה (*ksh*), “to cover,” and understood as referring to the new moon (specifically the new moon of Tishrei), when the moon’s face is almost totally concealed.

On the word *ba-keseh*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:6; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 8a–b, 34a; *Beitsah* 16a; *Sanhedrin* 11b, 96b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:6; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 39, 166a; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:5; *Zohar* 1:114b; 2:184a; 3:98b, 98b–99a (*Piq*), 100b, 231b, 275a.

456. **Seventh hall…** The seventh hall on the side of holiness pertains to *Binah* (and *Malkhut*). Whereas *Binah* is often associated with the flow of wine, its counterpart on the side of impurity is the dregs of wine. Harsh forces of judgment manifest here—the squeezing of the grapes.

On Genesis 9:21 describing Noah, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 23; *Zohar* 1:73a–b, 76a, 83a, 140b, 192a; 2:245a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 22c (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 36–37 (43–44). On Eve’s squeezing grapes, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:5, in the name of Rabbi Aivu: “She squeezed grapes and offered them to him.” See *Zohar* 1:36a, 192a. According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 15:7 and BT *Sanhedrin* 70a, Adam ate from the vine.

The full verse from Psalms reads: *There is a cup in YHVH’s hand with foaming wine fully mixed; from this He*

pours; all the wicked of the earth drink, draining it to the very dregs. See *Zohar* 2:246b (*Heikh*).

457. **impure souls that descend…** Whereas holy souls and spirits originate from the seventh hall of holiness (see *Zohar* 2:259a; above, page 147), impure souls and spirits (of bastards) originate here.

ממזר (*Mamzer*), "misbegotten," technically, the offspring of an adulterous or incestuous union (not a child born out of wedlock). Here, the name *mamzer* is associated with *el zar*, "alien god," signifying the demonic realm. As the father was immersed in the other side, so the child resulting from the forbidden union is contaminated by the other side. See JT *Qiddushin* 3:12, 64c; 4:14, 66b; *Kallah* 1:16; Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 23:3; *Zohar* 1:118a (*MhN*); cf. 2:113b.

458. ***Tsofneyah tsafan ruaḥ, Restraining her is like restraining the wind…*** The verse from Proverbs refers to the contentious wife. The word רוח (*ruaḥ*) means both "spirit" and "wind."

In its simple sense, the clause from Joel means: *I will drive the northerner far from you*. According to BT *Sukkah* 52a, *ha-tsefoni* is interpreted as *the hidden one*, alluding to the evil impulse.

On the names of the halls and the names of the evil impulse, see *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*; above, p. 179 and n. 377). See also *ZḤ* 79c (*MhN, Rut*). On Netherworld, see Ezekiel 31:14, 16, 18.

459. **Here is a single point…** Compare the "single point" in the seventh hall of holiness (*Zohar* 2:259b, 260a; above, pages 151 and 153). See also 2:184b.

On objects and actions "bequeathed" to the Other Side, namely filthy words and objects thrown in rage, see 2:263b (*Heikh*; above, pages 182 and 183) in the first hall of impurity.

The significance of the "scintillating sparks" is not entirely apparent. See *Haggahot Maharḥu; Matoq mi-Devash*.

On spirits not embodied, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 7:5; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 17; *Zohar* 1:14a, 47b–48a, 178a; 2:155b; 3:142b (*IR*); and M *Avot* 5:6. On "seen and not seen," cf. BT *Berakhot* 43b: "To one person, [a demon] shows himself and causes harm; to two, he shows himself but does not cause harm; to three, he does not show himself at all."

460. **these do not remain in such filth of defilement like the others…** Even in the highest hall of impurity, some of the forces act for good.

See *Zohar* 3:25a: "Come and see: Among those evil species are rungs, one above the other. Their highest rung —those suspended in the air."

461. **appointed below as kings and officers…** Over other spirits below.

462. **fire and snow, called צלמון (*Tsalmon*)…** According to rabbinic literature, the yearlong punishment of the wicked in Hell is equally divided between fire and snow. See JT *Sanhedrin* 10:3, 29b; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 25, *Re'eh* 10; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 10:4; *Midrash Mishlei* 31:21; *Zohar* 1:6b, 62b, 68b, 238b.

Black Mountain renders צלמון (*tsalmon*), which derives from the root צלם (*tslm*), "to be dark, black," and refers in this psalm to a mountain shrouded in dark clouds, probably northeast of the Sea of Galilee. In the rabbinic sources cited above (excluding JT *Sanhedrin* 10:3, 29b), the verse *When Shaddai scatters kings, it snows on Black Mountain* is understood to mean that the wicked surrender their souls to final darkness in the snows of Hell—apparently playing on *tsalmon* and משלימין (*mashlimin*), "surrender." In BT *Berakhot* 15b, *tsalmon* is associated with צלמות (*tsalmavet*), "Shadow of Death," one of the names of Hell.

463. **for the pious of other nations…** The pious of the nations remain in the Side of Impurity, though they delight in the radiance from the Side of Holiness.

On the pious of the nations in the world to come, see *Tosefta Sanhedrin* 13:2; BT *Sanhedrin* 105a; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer*, 121; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:15; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 3:5, *Melakhim* 8:11; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 265 (131); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 66b (for a very close parallel); *ZḤ* 78d (*MhN, Rut*).

464. **places prepared for the kings of other nations…** Cf. [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 265 (131). Just as the seventh hall of holiness comprises the lower six halls, so the seventh hall of impurity comprises its lower six halls; hence the six openings.

465. **Thus concludes the seven halls…** So concludes the account of the seven halls of impurity—and thus the account of all the halls.

"His charms" renders לחישותיה (*leḥishutei*). See next note.

On the tail and head of the serpent, see *Zohar* 2:27b; 3:119a. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:467–69. Here the "head" and "tail" refer to the upper and lower halls on the side of impurity, respectively.

466. ***Does the snake bite without a whisper?…*** The full verse reads: *If the snake bites because no* לחש (*laḥash*), *charm, was uttered, there is no advantage to the charmer*. *Laḥash* means "whisper, incantation, charm, spell." Here it is understood as "whisper," and the phrase is interpreted as referring to the divine whisper that commands the snake to kill someone who deserves to die.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 10:11; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 4; *Zohar* 2:68b; 3:183b; *ZḤ* 54a, 78a (*MhN, Rut*).

Compare Satan's itinerary in BT *Bava Batra* 16a: "He descends and seduces, ascends and arouses wrath, obtains authorization and seizes the soul." See above at note 446.

The material that follows (extending until the end of the *parashah*) is not part of the *Heikhalot* stratum. See *Derekh Emet*, ad loc. Most of it also appears in the main body of the *Zohar*.

1. **commandments of the Lord…** In standard printed editions of the *Zohar* (following the Mantua edition), the *Piqqudin* stratum is found scattered and interspersed among *Ra'aya Meheimna*. As the manuscript witnesses attest, however, the *Piqqudin* is an independent and integral composition. The work is closely affiliated with the main body of the *Zohar*, as well as Moses de León's *Sefer ha-Rimmon*. See *Zohar* 1:11b–14b: "Rabbi Shim'on opened with the commandments of Torah." On this stratum, see Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 215–230; Sobol, "Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin." See also Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 50, and his n. 205; Margaliot, intro to *Zohar* 1 ("Ha-Ra'aya Meheimna: Sefer Mitsvot"); Scholem, *Major Trends*, 185; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:907, n. 244. For similar works from the same period, see Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*; Menaḥem Recanati, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*.

In his notes to Moses de León's *Shushan Edut*, p. 359, n. 231, Scholem suggests that material printed in *Zohar* 3:308a–b also belongs to this stratum. Since this material is not found in the manuscripts, I have not included it.

2. ***Remember* and *Observe*…** This reference alludes to the Torah's two versions of the Ten Commandments. The first version reads: זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Exodus 20:8). The second version reads: שמור (*Shamor*), *Observe, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Deuteronomy 5:12). According to rabbinic tradition, these two verses were spoken by God simultaneously.

For the kabbalist, *zakhor* suggests זכר (*zakhar*), "male," signifying the male divine potency, whereas the alternative formulation *shamor* signifies the female, *Shekhinah*. Furthermore, *zakhor* implies the 248 positive commandments of Torah (since time-bound positive commandments are generally incumbent only on men), while *shamor* implies the 365 negative commandments (incumbent on women as well), together totaling 613.

The *Zohar* here wonders about the verse from Leviticus. First, why does the verse distinguish between "observing" and "doing"? Isn't the latter superfluous? Second, if *observe* signifies the female and the negative commandments, why then is *remember*—designating the male and the positive commandments—not mentioned as well? How can *observe* refer to all the commandments?

On *remember* and *observe* being spoken simultaneously, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 7; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 20:8; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 5:12; JT *Nedarim* 3:2, 37d; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 27a. On the correlation with male and female, see BT *Berakhot* 20b; *Bahir* 124 (182); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 496–97; Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:8; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Sefer ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 420; *Zohar* 1:5b, 47b, 48b, 164b, 199b, 248a; 2:70b, 91a, 92a (*Piq*), 138a, 162a, 165b; 3:81b, 115b, 224a, 264a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 14, 118, 256, 365, 371; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal* 110; Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 63–71.

The *Zohar* misquotes the verse slightly. The verse reads: *You shall observe My commandments and do them. I am YHVH*. Cf. Deuteronomy 11:8.

3. **all is in this verse...** The verse does in fact allude to *zakhor* as well. Doing signifies remembering, since remembering constitutes doing. Thus, male and female are both implied in the verse. The Aramaic word *adkar*, "recall, remember," also means "to mention." Hence, recalling or mentioning, i.e., performing a commandment—especially one that involves speech, such as the reciting of prayers and blessings—below impacts (does) the celestial realms.

Beyond proving that the verse alludes to male and female and thus to positive and negative commandments, perhaps the *Zohar* intends that all the commandments—each specific one—contains a male and female element. Significantly, the male aspect is associated with theurgy, namely acting upon divinity, whereas the female is

associated with more conventional and “passive” fulfillment of the law. See Sobol, “Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin,” 61–62.

On a similar use of *adkar*, see *Zohar* 3:263b (*Piq*; below, page 247). On a similar reading of *va-asitem*, see *Zohar* 3:113a.

4. **first commandment…** In contrast to the list of commandments found in the *Haqdamah* of the *Zohar* (see 1:11b–12a), the *Zohar* here follows Maimonides by beginning with the knowledge of God. See *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 1:1: “The ultimate foundation and pillar of wisdom is to know that there is a first existent who brings every existent into existence. Every existent in heaven and earth and what is between has come into existence solely out of His genuine existence.” See also idem, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 1; *Sefer ha-Ḥinnukh*, commandment 25.

Here knowledge of God is divided into two categories: general, and particular. The former is associated with *Malkhut*, the female potency, and pertains to the generalized knowledge of God as ruler and supreme power. The latter is associated with *Tif’eret*, the male potency, and pertains to knowledge of the mysteries of Torah and the inner workings of divinity—namely knowledge of the *sefirot*, the divine attributes. See *Zohar* 3:111b–112a (*Piq*; below, page 217). Cf. Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1060, n. 386, Galante, *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc., and *Matoq mi-Devash*, all of whom associate “general” knowledge with *Tif’eret*, and “particular” knowledge with *Malkhut* in this passage. Although their converse interpretation is supported by the opening phrase of the next paragraph (“General and particular are beginning and end, mystery of male and female as one”), the following *piqquda* makes the intended correspondence clear. Admittedly, in many places in the *Zohar*, “general” does signify *Tif’eret* and “particular” signifies *Malkhut*, but see *Zohar* 1:47b, where the referents are as here.

On the categories כלל (*kelal*), "general," and פרט (*perat*), "particular," see the Thirteen Hermeneutic Rules in the *Baraita of Rabbi Yishma'el* found at the beginning of the *Sifra*; and *Tosefta Sanhedrin* 7:11. See also *Zohar* 2:43b (*Piq*); 3:97b (*Piq*). See also *Zohar* 1:16b, 47b, 246b; 2:3a, 161b, 176a–b; 3:264a; *ZḤ* 41c; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut* 335–36; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 107–8.

On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1060–63.

On the order of the commandments in *Sefer ha-Rimmon* and the *Zohar*, see Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 27–34.

5. **general and particular…** The structure of general and particular informs various domains of being: knowledge of God; the female and male divine potencies; performance of the commandments; and the composition of the human being (a whole comprised of parts, the species comprised of individuals—perhaps also created by "general" and "particular," the divine female and male). "Restoration of the world" apparently refers to the union of the male and female aspects of divinity, as accomplished by the performance of the commandments. It may also allude to the union of earthly men and women.

"The soul-breath of life" renders נשמתא דחיי (*nishmeta de-ḥayyei*), an expression that originates in Genesis 2:7: *He blew into his nostrils* נשמת חיים (*nishmat ḥayyim*), *the breath of life*. Here, *nishmeta*, "breath," implies נשמה (*neshamah*), "soul"—that is, the highest level of soul (in the medieval reckoning), by which a person perceives God.

Knowledge of our having been created by God is part of "general" knowledge.

6. **they did not know the blessed Holy One…** At all, even in a general way. On the Israelites' not knowing God, see *Zohar* 1:157b; 2:161a (closely paralleling the passage here). Cf. Exodus 3:13. For a different view, see *Zohar* 2:198b.

General knowledge of God served as a condition for the miracles, for without such knowledge the Israelites would have attributed them to sorcery. See *Nitsotsei Orot*, ad loc.

The full verse from Exodus reads: *I will take you to Me as a people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am YHVH your God who takes you out from under the burdens of Egypt*.

7. ***YHVH is Elohim...*** It is only after forty years of engaging in "general" knowledge of the divine and in the commandments that the Israelites are initiated into "particular" knowledge—namely of the attributes of divinity, *YHVH* and *Elohim*.

In rabbinic literature, the two names represent the divine qualities of compassion and justice, respectively. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; and 13:3, where יהוה אלהים (*YHVH Elohim*) is called "a complete name." In Kabbalah, the two names often designate *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, who should not be separated. See *Zohar* 1:12a, 91a; 2:26b, 161a–b; 3:65a; *ZḤ* 70d (*ShS*).

"General" knowledge (as conveyed in Exodus 6:7) and "particular" knowledge (as conveyed by the verse from Deuteronomy) are a united whole.

See BT *Avodah Zarah* 5b, in the name of Rava: "A person fathoms his master only after forty years." See Deuteronomy 29:3–4: *But YHVH has not given you a heart to know and eyes to see and ears to hear until this day. I led you forty years through the wilderness*.

Deuteronomy 4:39 reads in full: *Know today and take to your heart that YHVH is Elohim in the heavens above and on the earth below, there is none else*. On this verse, see also Baḥya ibn Paquda, *Ḥovot ha-Levavot, Sha'ar ha-Yiḥud* 3; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 15.

8. **Now, you might say...** In the list of commandments found in the *Haqdamah* of the *Zohar*, the first commandment is indeed awe of *YHVH*, supported by the verse from Proverbs. See *Zohar* 1:11b. See also Moses de León *Sefer*

ha-Rimmon, 14–15, 22. In the *Piqqudin*, the commandment of awe is the fifth commandment. See *Zohar* 3:263b (*Piq*; below, page 225). Throughout the *Zohar* "awe of *YHVH*" designates *Malkhut*. Here, the verse from Proverbs is subsumed into the category of "particular" knowledge of God; it is interpreted to mean that one must know who "awe of *YHVH*" is, namely that it signifies the last divine potency, *Shekhinah* (*Malkhut*). Awe is thus part of knowledge. On this passage, see also Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 33. On awe as *Shekhinah* and as gateway to the divine realm, see also *Zohar* 1:7b; 3:56b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 24–32; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:988–89. For a different interpretation of this passage, see ibid., 1061–62, nn. 397–401.

9. **single totality, one mystery** As noted, general and particular knowledge of God are one whole, reflecting and participating in *Malkhut* and *Tif'eret*, who are the divine female and male, respectively.

10. **248 limbs… days of the year…** See the famous dictum by Rabbi Simlai in BT *Makkot* 23b: "Six hundred and thirteen commandments were conveyed to Moses—365 negative commandments, corresponding to the number of solar days, and 248 positive commandments, corresponding to the members [or: limbs] of the human body." On the 248 bodily members (joints or bones covered with flesh and sinews), see M *Oholot* 1:8. See also *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:1; *Zohar* 1:170b, 232a (*Tos*). Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi* on Genesis 1:27.

This paragraph is quite obscure but seems to mean: once one has acquired general knowledge regarding the existence and dominion of divinity, one can then begin perfecting oneself, fulfilling the telos of the human being. This telos involves fulfilling the commandments, but also knowing their symbolic correlate: namely that the positive commandments (the limbs of the body) correspond to the divine male, and the negative commandments (the days of

the year) to the divine female. (See above, note 2.) Just as knowledge has a general and particular aspect, so does the fulfillment of the commandments. When fulfillment is informed by this particular (i.e., mystical) knowledge, the human being and the world receive divine bounty from above. It is only when one has particular knowledge that one truly understands what the human body and time are for. See Sobol, "Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin," 34–35. For various interpretations, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1062; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

"Limb" renders שייפא (*shaipha*)—a frequent Zoharic neologism that may be based playfully on the Talmudic line (BT *Sotah* 7b): על איבריה לשפא (*al eivreih la-shappa*), "His arm [or: limb] entered the casket." Or, the Zoharic sense of *shaipha* may derive from BT *Ḥullin* 42b: "This joint of the thighbone דשף (*de-shaph*), that slipped [i.e., was dislocated], from its place [i.e., out of its socket]." Note also the expression in Job 33:21: ושפו עצמותיו (*Ve-shuppu atsmotav*), *And his bones are rubbed away*. See *Arukh*, s.v. *shaph*; Rashi, *Sotah* 7b, s.v. *la-shappa*; idem on Job 33:21, citing *Ḥullin* 42b; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 227; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, s.v. *shappa, shphph*.

11. **How do all the days of the year bestow healing to the limbs?...** If the days of the year correspond to *Malkhut*, and the limbs to *Tif'eret*, then how do the former bestow upon the latter? Though one can understand how *Malkhut* bestows healing upon human limbs below, how does She bestow healing on the upper limbs—the divine grade above Her? Surely, the higher (*Tif'eret*, the limbs) should bestow bounty and healing upon the lower (*Malkhut*, the days of the year)!

The "bizarre" arrangement is indeed correct both above and below, since when the upper limbs (*Tif'eret*) bestow bounty upon *Malkhut*, then bounty from even higher in the sefirotic realm flows into *Tif'eret*—ready to pour down into *Malkhut*. According to the *Zohar, Malkhut* is the key agent

in this entire process, since when She receives from *Tif'eret*, then *Tif'eret* receives from above. In the lower realm, the human being who performs the commandments causes the actual days of the year to be blessed, thereby blessing and stimulating *Malkhut* to shower blessings upon him. Hence, above, the "days of the year," signifying *Malkhut*, are blessed by the "human being," namely the sefirotic human being, signifying *Tif'eret*; and below, the days of the year—both actual and also signifying the powers of *Malkhut*—are blessed by the actual human being.

12. **for they are called "human"...** The *sefirot* as a whole are called אדם (*adam*), "human," or Primordial Adam. By performing the commandments, the people of Israel perfect themselves and cleave to and perfect the divine realm; hence only they are truly human.

See BT *Yevamot* 60b–61a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "The graves of Gentiles do not impart impurity by a tent [i.e., one who stands on or bends over such a grave, thereby constituting a tent with his body, is not rendered impure], as is said: *You, My sheep, sheep of My pasture, are human* [*and I am your God*] (Ezekiel 34:31). You are called *human*; Gentiles are not called *human*." See also BT *Bava Metsi'a* 114b.

Rabbi Shim'on assumes a connection between *human* and "impurity by a tent," based on the wording of Numbers 19:14: *When a human dies in a tent, whoever enters the tent and whoever is in the tent shall be impure seven days*.

See *Zohar* 1:20b, 131a, 220a; 2:86a; 3:147a, 219a, 238b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 78d (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 48a.

On the divine significance of *adam*, see Genesis 1:26–27; Ezekiel 1:26; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 28–92 (passim).

13. ***Anokhi, I am...*** The opening statement of the Ten Commandments alludes to both "general" and "particular" knowledge of God. The opening word *I am* signifies general knowledge—namely the existence of God as ruler of the

universe; the following two words, *YHVH, your God*, indicate particular knowledge—namely the mysteries of the *sefirot*, since *YHVH* signifies *Tif'eret* and *your God* signifies *Malkhut*. The first commandment to know God thus includes both general and particular knowledge, which are also known as "beginning and end."

On the many mysteries of the phrase *anokhi*, see *Zohar* 2:90b–91a; *ZḤ* 41b–c; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 380. See also Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 1:6; Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:2.

14. **second commandment…** עבודה (*Avodah*) means both "service" and "worship"; it traditionally refers to the cult of the Temple as well as to prayer, also known as the "service of the heart." See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 41; BT *Ta'anit* 2a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16; Rashi on Deuteronomy 11:13; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 1:1; idem, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 5. Here the term "service" is expanded to include all the commandments. See also Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 15. See below, *Zohar* 2:59b (*Piq*) at note 120.

On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1073–75.

15. **Why are they *servants*?…** Having redeemed them from slavery in Egypt, God engages the Children of Israel in service to Him. (Having been pharaoh's slaves, they become God's servants; the Hebrew word עבד [*eved*] conveys both meanings.) He thus earned the right to say *I am YHVH your God* and be owed fidelity as such. See Rashi on Numbers 15:41. Cf. *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 5. See *Zohar* 2:40a.

16. **servant… son…** One who knows God in general terms and performs the commandments simply is called a "servant"; whereas one who knows the mysteries of Torah, the secrets of divinity, is called a "son"—and enjoys full access to the divine realm. Moses is the paragon; see Numbers 12:7: *In all My house he is trusted*.

On Israel as being both servants and children of God, see BT *Bava Batra* 10a (which cites the verses from Leviticus and Deuteronomy): "When you fulfill the will of the Omnipresent, you are called 'children'; when you do not fulfill the will of the Omnipresent, you are called 'servants.'" See also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 96; BT *Qiddushin* 36a; Musaf Rosh ha-Shanah. Cf. *Zohar* 3:7b; *ZḤ* 91a (*MhN, Eikhah*), 107a (*Tiq*). See Liebes, "Zohar ve-Eros," 74; idem, "Ziqqat ha-Zohar le-Erets Yisra'el," 39–40; Idel, *Ben: Sonship and Jewish Mysticism*, 377–506. See also Hebrews 3:5–6, where Moses is described as a "servant" and Jesus as "son." See *Zohar* 2:43a (*Piq*; below, page 234).

On general and particular knowledge of God, see above, note 4. On the verse from Deuteronomy, see also 2:87b, 97b–98a; 3:24b.

17. **not remove himself from the category of "servant"…** The mystic who has penetrated the mysteries of Torah and divinity, thus becoming a "son," is still obligated by the performance of the commandments as a "servant." Perfection requires that one be both. Divine intimacy remains nomian, even as fulfillment of those precepts is insufficient for religious perfection.

18. **mystery of servant… mystery of son…** The categories "servant" and "son" correspond to the divine rungs *Malkhut* and *Tif'eret*, respectively. Just as the divine male and female must be together, so the mystic must combine within himself both "servant" and "son"—the general and the particular—thereby reflecting and participating in the divine union on high. Cf. *Zohar* 3:82b (*RM*).

Malkhut is called "lord of all the earth" since She is the lowest *sefirah* and governs the physical world. She is a servant vis-à-vis the *sefirot* above Her. On this epithet, see *Zohar* 1:2a, 16b, 50b, 228b; 2:13a, 235b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh* 75 (95).

The phrase *My son, My firstborn, is Israel* from Exodus refers to *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el*, "Beauty of

Israel," the heavenly Israel, son of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*. See *Zohar* 1:95b, 124b, 219a, 223b, 233b; 2:79a, 85b, 197a; 3:74a.

19. **also called "lord of all the earth"...** The supernal servant, *Malkhut*, continuously praises Her partner, *Tif'eret*. She is always serving, i.e., carrying out Her functions as governor of the world. The person who fulfills the role of servant (through prayer and the basic observance of the commandments) attains the rung of *Malkhut*—and like Her is considered a "lord" insofar as his religious service sustains the world (and *Malkhut*). On prayer as "service," see above note 14.

20. **son of the blessed Holy One...** Knowledge of the divine mysteries ("mystery of wisdom") grants the "son" access to the divine realm of the Father. Even the angels cannot prevent his coming as he pleases. "To enter to the Father" may denote the ascent of prayer. See *Zohar* 2:57a.

PR13, Cremona, and Mantua read "One who delves into Torah."

21. **a person must incorporate both...** To be bound to both *Malkhut* and *Tif'eret*, one's prayer must incorporate the roles of servant and son. As servant, one fulfills the *halakhic* (legal) and literal requirements of prayer, which draws down the blessings that maintain the world below. As son, one cleaves to divinity through mystical intention and praxis. Perhaps the intentions and techniques of prayer that are outlined in the *Heikhalot* stratum are intended here.

22. **arrays the mystery of all faith in one entirety...** One who comprises both roles—servant and son—effectuates total harmony among the *sefirot*.

"Trustee of the palace" recalls the description of Moses in Numbers 12:7: *In all My house he is trusted*.

23. **Unique to be with the unique...** That is, the blessed Holy One with the singled-out individual. The phrase derives from BT *Pesaḥim* 118a, spoken by God about Abraham in the furnace: "I am unique in My world; he is

unique in his. It is fitting that the Unique save the unique!" See also *Midrash Tehillim* 117:3.

Cf. Plotinus, *The Enneads* 6.9.11: "the flight of the alone to the Alone."

24. ***You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory…*** God is glorified when the individual is both servant and son (alluded to here by "Israel," namely the celestial Israel, the divine son)—connected to and therefore connecting *Malkhut* and *Tif'eret*.

On the verse from Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:169a, 219a; 2:79a, 87b, 161a, 203a. See below, page 232.

25. **third commandment…** The Torah contains the mysteries of the divine realm (the ways of the *sefirot*). One who studies her engages with these mysteries and comes into contact with *Shekhinah*.

On studying Torah every day, see *Zohar* 1:12b, where it is the fifth commandment; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 15, 110 (where it is the eighth commandment). See also Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Talmud Torah* 1:8; idem, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 11.

On Torah study as conferring numerous boons and delivering one from evil, see, for example, *Zohar* 1:131b–132a; 3:260a. See also *Avot* 6:7: "Great is Torah, for it gives life to those who practice it, in this world and in the world that is coming…." See also *Kallah Rabbati* 5:7; *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 24. See also BT *Ḥagigah* 27a, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "The fire of Hell has no power over scholars." On the connection between Torah study and presence of the *Shekhinah*, see M *Avot* 3:2, 6.

On the ways of the blessed Holy One, see below, *piqquda* sixteen, page 256.

26. **Torah is the Tree of Life…** The full verse from Exodus reads: *Speak to the Children of Israel and have them take Me an offering; from every man whose heart impels him, you shall take My offering*. These offerings are donations of material for the construction of the Dwelling

(or Tabernacle). Here, *My offering* designates the word of Torah that should be acquired from *every man*. Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, the "offering" in this verse signifies *Shekhinah*, so perhaps the verse is also saying: engage with *Shekhinah* through learning Torah from whoever you can. See *Zohar* 2:127a, 134b, 138b, 146a.

See M *Avot* 4:1: "Ben Zoma said, 'Who is wise? One who learns from every person, as is said: *From all my teachers have I gained understanding* (Psalms 119:99).'" See *Zohar* 2:247b (*Heikh*).

Based on the verse in Proverbs (which describes wisdom), Torah is identified with the Tree of Life. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 47; BT *Berakhot* 32b. In Kabbalah, both Torah and Tree of Life symbolize *Tif'eret*, the male aspect of divinity. See *Zohar* 1:152b, 168a, 174b, 193a; 3:53b, 176a, 260a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 330.

27. **unite with Torah above...** Namely, *Tif'eret*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:200a; 3:73a, 160b.

See BT *Berakhot* 64a, in the name of Rav: "The disciples of the wise have no respite, neither in this world nor in the world to come, as is said: *They go from strength to strength, appearing before God in Zion* (Psalms 84:8)." See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:10: "Rabbi Yoḥanan said, 'Even when a Torah scholar has died, his lips move in the grave. Why? *Stirring the lips of sleepers*'.... Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa and Rabbi Simon. One said, 'Like one who drinks spiced wine.' The other said, 'Like one who drinks aged wine: even though he has drunk it, the taste and aroma are still in his mouth.'"

In numerous rabbinic parallels, the first part of this teaching reads differently. See, e.g., BT *Sanhedrin* 90b: "Rabbi Yoḥanan said in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yehotsadak, 'If a law is quoted in a person's name in this world, his lips stir in the grave, as is said: *stirring the lips of sleepers.*'"

See JT *Berakhot* 2:1, 4b; *Sheqalim* 2:4, 47a; *Mo'ed Qatan* 3:7, 83c; BT *Yevamot* 97a, *Bekhorot* 31b; *Midrash Shemu'el* 19:4; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 2, 5b; *Midrash Tehillim* 30:3; *Zohar* 3:39a–b, 96a, 135a (*IR*); *ZḤ* 85c (*MhN, Rut*). In the passage from *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, the phrase "a Torah scholar" renders בן תורה (*ben torah*), "a son of Torah," a reading that I have adopted instead of בן תורתה (*ben tortah*), "[Rabbi Yoḥanan] son of Tortah."

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Your palate is like fine wine—flowing to my beloved smoothly, gliding over* [or: *trickling over*; *stirring*] *the lips of sleepers*.

28. **fourth commandment...** The verb ליחדא (*le-yaḥda*), rendered here as "to unify," also means "to proclaim unique." Both are accomplished through the recitation of the *Shema*, beginning *Hear O Israel! YHVH is our God, YHVH is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4).

See *Zohar* 1:12a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 15. See also the tenth *piqquda*, *Zohar* 3:263b (*Piq*; below, page 245), and 2:43b (*Piq*; below, page 238). Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 1:7; idem, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 2.

On the *Shema* more generally in the *Zohar*, see 1:18b; 2:133b–134b, 160b–162a, 216b; 3:162a, 195b, 203b–204a, 236b, 262b–263a, 264a–b, 268a; *ZḤ* 25c–d (*MhN*), 48a, 56d–58d (*QhM*), 77d (*MhN, Rut*), 90c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 25–29; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 78–85 (100–108); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:971–73. On this *piqquda*, see Benarroch, "The Mystery of Unity."

29. **joining all his limbs...** The recital of the *Shema* requires heightened concentration and consciousness of one's own unity, which in turn affects unity among the *sefirot* above.

On the connection between the recitation of the *Shema* and limbs, see *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 6: "Do not look askance at the recital of the *Shema*, for there are 248 words in it like

the sum of limbs in the human body.... The blessed Holy One said, 'If you guard My [248], reciting *Shema* as prescribed, I will guard your [248].'" On intention when reciting the *Shema*, see BT *Berakhot* 13a–b.

Whereas in *Tanḥuma* the recitation of the *Shema* protects human limbs, in the *Zohar* such recitation constructs the supernal limbs—the *sefirot*, the "body" of divinity.

See also *Shibbolei ha-Leqet ha-Shalem*, 15; *Maḥazor Vitri*, 65; El'azar of Worms, *Sefer ha-Roqeaḥ*, 320; Abraham ben Isaac of Narbonne, *Sefer ha-Eshkol*, 9; Judah son of Yaqar, *Peirush ha-Tefillot ve-ha-Berakhot*, 30–31; *Peirushei Siddurei ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 297; Abraham ben Natan ha-Yarḥi, *Sefer ha-Manhig, Dinei Tefillah*, 33; *Kol Bo*, 9; Moses ben Jacob (of Kiev), *Sefer Shushan Sodot* (Korets, 1779), 8b–9a; *Zohar* 1:24a (*TZ*), 101a (*ST*), 253a (*Hash*); *ZḤ* 77d (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 26; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 84 (107); David Abudarham, *Sefer Abudarham*, 77; Ta-Shma, "El Melekh Ne'eman"; idem, "Tiqqunim ve-hosafot"; Wolfson, "Dimmui Antropomorfi," 161–63, esp. the passage from Moses de León's *Shushan Edut* that has been preserved only in manuscript, and his n. 62.

On limbs, see note 10.

30. ***Heleniu*... gatherer of roses...** This paragraph is dense and somewhat obscure. The unification effectuated by the *Shema* has two components and is imagined through the metaphor of gathering roses, which are equated with limbs. The upper roses and limbs—celestial potencies associated with the divine male—are gathered by the Supreme Name, apparently signifying *YHVH*, i.e., *Tif'eret*. The lower roses and limbs—celestial potencies associated with the divine female, *Shekhinah*, though perhaps also including the human limbs united through the *Shema*—are gathered by a celestial figure name *Heleniu*. When each "system" is complete, the upper and lower roses then become a single

body, signifying the union of male and female in the godhead.

Heleniu (whose name recalls Helen of Troy or perhaps Helios) does not appear elsewhere in the *Zohar*. It would seem to indicate Metatron, the servant of *Malkhut*. The name הלניו (*Heleniu*) may derive from אלהינו (*Eloheinu*), or from some unknown technique of letter combination from the opening line of the *Shema*. (See the comments in the margin of MS O21.) That *Heleniu* is associated with the divine female is apparent from his location, namely beneath 248 worlds, since this number is associated with the male in the *Piqqudin* (see above, note 2).

The numbers 42 and 72, associated with the divine male and female respectively, derive from the number of words in the second and third paragraphs of the *Shema* (counting the opening proclamation as the first paragraph). These numbers are in turn associated with the 42-letter name of God and the 72 names of God. See also *Zohar* 2:92b (*Piq*; below, page 284).

On the 42 words in the "second" paragraph of the *Shema*, see *Zohar ZḤ* 46d, 48a, 90c (all *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 83 (106); idem, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 28. On the 72 words in the "third" paragraph of the *Shema*, see *ZḤ* 46d, 48a, 90c (all *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 84 (106); idem, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 29. It should be noted that the "paragraph" in Deuteronomy with 72 words is not a natural literary paragraph, and is made to end "artificially" in the middle.

The Name of Forty-Two Letters is mentioned in the name of Rav, though not recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. Hai Gaon indicates that it consists of the following seven sets of six letters: אבגיתץ, קרעשטן, נגדיכש, בטרצתג, חקבטנע, יגלפזק, שקוצית which are also the initial letters of the 42 words constituting the prayer *Anna be-Khoaḥ* (Please, with the Strength [of Your Right Hand's Greatness]). According to Jacob ben Meir Tam (Rabbenu Tam), this name consists of

the first 42 letters of the Torah, from the ב (*bet*) of בראשית (*Bereshit*), *In the beginning*, through the ב (*bet*) of בהו (*bohu*), *empty* (or *void*) (Genesis 1:2).

See Lewin, *Otsar ha-Ge'onim*, 4:2:23 (on *Ḥagigah* 14b); *Tosafot, Ḥagigah* 11b, s.v. *ein doreshin*; *Zohar* 1:1a, 15b, 30a–b; 2:4b (*MhN*), 92b (*Piq*), 130b, 132b, 175b, 234a–b; 3:78a, 172b; *ZḤ* 42a; Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim* 21:12–13; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 94–95; Idel, "Al ha-Peirushim," 161–62, n. 24; 167–68, n. 52. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:62. In *Or Yaqar* 1:4a, Cordovero describes how the name *YHVH* can be permuted into the Name of Forty-Two Letters. See *Zohar* 1:9a; 2:260a (*Heikh*).

The divine name of God, consisting of 72 names, is derived from the description of the splitting of the Red Sea: Exodus 14:19–21. Each of these three verses contains 72 letters. The name is composed of 72 triads (also called "names"), according to the following pattern: the first letter of the first verse, the last letter of the second verse, the first letter of the third verse (forming the first triad); the second letter of the first verse, the penultimate letter of the second verse, the second letter of the third verse (the second triad); etc.

See *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 14:21; *Bereshit Rabbah* 44:19; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:2; Rashi on BT *Sukkah* 45a, s.v. אני (*Ani*); Hai Gaon, in Lewin (ed.), *Otsar ha-Ge'onim, Ḥagigah* 23; Ibn Ezra on Exodus 14:19; *Bahir* 79 (110); *Zohar* 1:7b, 17a; 2:51b, 132b, 270a; 3:78a, 150b–151a; *ZḤ* 76b (*MhN, Rut*); Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 95–97; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, 14:67, 284–86. For additional references and other traditions, see Vol. 4, pp. 257–62 and nn. 216, 221–26.

On Song of Songs 6:2, see *Zohar* 1:56b, where it is cited in the context of Enoch's having been plucked by God before he became corrupted. See also *ZḤ* 20a (*MhN*), where the motif of gathering or plucking roses appears in

the same context. In *ZḤ* 36b (*ST*), the motif and verse appear again, though in that instance Metatron (not God) is the one who removes the righteous before their future corruption. Finally, in *ZḤ* 47d–48a, the verse is cited in the context of removing the righteous before their time, and again Metatron is present. That the rose motif is associated with Enoch-Metatron lends support to the identification of *Heleniu* with Metatron. See Sobol, "Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin," 82–83. On *Heleniu* and Helen of Troy, see Liebes, "Porphoriyatah shel Helena," 297; idem, "Ha-Mashiaḥ shel ha-Zohar," 223.

The verse from Zechariah, which is cited frequently throughout the *Zohar*, is often understood to signify the union of the divine male (*YHVH*) with the divine female (*His name*). See *Zohar* 2:10a, 134a–b, 161b–162a; 3:7b, 15b, 77b, 93b.

On the connection between roses and the *Shema*, see also *Zohar* 3:233b; *TZ* 25, 71a.

31. **mystery of *one*... "complete offering"...** The unification of the upper and lower limbs—the male and female, respectively—takes place at the precise moment that *one* is recited. The united whole is called a complete offering.

On prolonging *eḥad, one*—the final word in the opening verse of the *Shema*—see BT *Berakhot* 13b. See also *Zohar* 1:12a; 2:216b; Moses de León, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 27. Here, the last two letters ח (*ḥet*) and ד (*dalet*)—which together spell חד (*ḥad*), "one," in Aramaic—are prolonged. No reason is stated, though perhaps the *ḥet* (whose numerical value is eight) signifies the eight "male" *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* to *Yesod*, and the *dalet* signifies *Malkhut*. *Alef* is not prolonged since it signifies *Keter* and *Ein Sof*, which are hidden.

According to a rabbinic interpretation, *to till it and tend it* implies the obligation to bring sacrificial offerings. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:5: "[*YHVH Elohim took the human and placed him in the Garden of Eden*] *to till it and tend it*—these are the offerings." See *Zohar* 2:165b, where this

verse is also cited: "*to till it*: 248 upper limbs; *and tend it*: 365 lower limbs," pointing to the positive and negative commandments, which correspond to the divine male and female respectively. (On these numbers, see above, note 2.) The second word (*ul-shomrah*) also points to *shamor*, which the *Piqqudin* explicitly associates with the divine female.

On the phrase from Genesis, see also *Zohar* 1:27a (*TZ*), 57b, 141b, 199b. On "complete offering" as designating the union of male and female, see *Zohar* 1:239b. See 3:44a (*Piq*; below, page 254), where the phrase is used in the context of circumcision. See also 3:164a. According to Benarroch, "Mystery of Unity," 249–50, the *Shema* mystery of the *Piqqudin* involves the "offering" of human limbs, which combine with the divine limbs. On reciting *eḥad* and the idea of the *Shema* as an offering, see also the account of Rabbi Akiva's martyrdom in BT *Berakhot* 61b.

32. **head of finest gold...** See Song of Songs 5:11: *His head finest gold, his locks wavy, black as a raven*. The union of male and female effectuated by the *Shema* prayer culminates in the "crowning" of the blessed Holy One, which apparently indicates the flow of divine bounty from *Binah* and beyond.

The numerical value of ששנים (*shoshanim*), "roses," is 700 (when spelled deficiently, as in the cited verse), which equals the combined numerical value of פז (*paz*), 87, and the 613 commandments—which itself is comprised of the 248 positive (male) commandments and the 365 negative (female) commandments.

On prayers becoming a crown upon the head of God, see *Shemot Rabbah* 21:4, in the name of Rabbi Me'ir and Rabbi Abba: "When Israel prays, you do not find them all praying as one, but rather each assembly prays on its own, one after the other. When they have all finished, the angel appointed over prayers gathers all the prayers offered in all the synagogues and fashions them into crowns, which he places on the head of the blessed Holy One."

In BT *Ḥagigah* 13b, it is reported that the angel Sandalfon "is higher than his fellows by a distance of five hundred years, and he stands behind the Chariot binding crowns for his Lord." See *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *ve-qosher*; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 495; *Zohar* 1:37b, 132a, 167b; 2:58a, 146b, 202b, 209a, 245b (*Heikh*); Recanati on Genesis 19:27, 26a; Green, *Keter*, 37–38. See Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 195, citing El'azar of Worms, *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah*, where the crown motif and the forty-two-letter name are mentioned together.

33. ***apple… rose…*** Again, *shoshanim*, "roses," which has the numerical value of 700, comprises the sum of the male and female commandments, which total 613 (for "limbs of two aspects"), plus 87 (for *paz*, "gold"). Whenever the male and female unite, the golden crown ascends.

The *apple* and *rose* in the verses from the Song of Songs signify the male and female aspects of divinity, respectively. The full verses read: *Like a rose among thorns, so is my beloved among the maidens. Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. In his shade I delight to sit, and his fruit is sweet to my palate*.

According to the Midrash, the entire biblical book of the Song of Songs is a love song between the Assembly of Israel and her divine beloved. From a kabbalistic perspective, Assembly of Israel signifies not only the people of Israel but also (often primarily) their divine counterpart. Hence the song celebrates not only human-divine love, but also the love between *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*, the blessed Holy One.

On *Shekhinah* as "rose," see *Zohar* 1:1a, 137a; 2:20a (*MhN*), 189b; 3:37b–38a, 107a, 233b, 286b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 183–84. On *Tif'eret* as "apple" (combining the white of the pulp, the red of the skin, and the green of the leaves—symbolizing the triad *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*), see *Zohar* 1:85a; 2:122a; 3:25a, 74a, 133b (*IR*),

286b; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 489; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 36.

34. **fifth commandment…** On awe, see above at note 8. See also *Zohar* 1:11b, where awe is the first commandment, and for a parallel discussion on the different types of awe. See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 4; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 14.

On general and particular awe, see next two notes. Cf. *ZḤ* 5d, 7d (both *MhN*).

35. **site called awe…** *Shekhinah* (*Malkhut*) is also known as "sanctuary," site of divine judgment. Awe "in general terms" is the fear of divine punishment. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 33b.

On the verse from Leviticus, see *Zohar* 1:5b–6a; 3:81b–82a. See also *piqquda* twenty, below, page 271. On the verse from Deuteronomy, cf. *Zohar* 2:202b.

"Lash of fire" renders פולסא דנורא (*pulsa de-nura*), on which see BT *Ḥagigah* 15a, *Yoma* 77a, *Bava Metsi'a* 85b; *Zohar* 1:223b; 2:51b, 66b–67a; 3:60a, 170b.

36. **awe of love, the essence and foundation…** "Awe in particular" is the awe of divine majesty, as opposed to fear of punishment. It is vastly superior. See Baḥya Ibn Paquda, *Ḥovot ha-Levavot, Sha'ar Ahavat Ha-Shem* 6; *Zohar* 1:11b; 2:33b, 216a; *TZ* 4, 141a; 33, 77a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 30–31; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:974–990, esp. 988–90.

37. **sixth commandment…** Love transcends fear.

On the commandment to love God, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 15, 38–45; *Zohar* 1:11b–12a. See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 3. On Abraham's love, see *Zohar* 3:267a. In Kabbalah, Abraham is associated with *Ḥesed*, "Love." See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:990.

The reference to Abraham's "surrendering his body and soul" presumably alludes to the extra-biblical legend of his

being cast into the furnace by King Nimrod. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 38:13.

On loving God "body and soul," see Deuteronomy 6:5; M *Berakhot* 9:5; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; BT *Berakhot* 61b; *Zohar* 3:68a.

38. **one who loves... sustains ten utterances...** The love of God sustains the ten *sefirot*, termed here "utterances."

On the ten utterances, see M *Avot* 5:1: "The world was created through ten utterances." Only nine explicit commands appear in the opening chapter of Genesis, but the decade is completed by counting the phrase *In the beginning*. See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; B 36; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:1; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 32a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3 (and Luria's note 73); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 506; *Zohar* 1:15a, 16b, 30a; 2:14b (*MhN*), 34b, 67a, 75b, 169b, 178b (*SdTs*); 3:11b; *ZḤ* 2d (*MhN*).

The reference to "ten utterances, above and below" may refer to the *sefirot* and then to a decade within *Shekhinah*. Alternatively (or additionally), according to Rabbi Levi in JT *Berakhot* 1:4, 3c, the Ten Commandments are encoded in the *Shema* (see also *Zohar* 3:267a). Hence, love sustains the utterances "above," namely the *sefirot*, and also "below," insofar as the *Shema*, which begins with the injunction to love God, contains the Ten Commandments.

According to rabbinic tradition, Abraham passed ten divine tests. See Jubilees 17:17; 19:8; M *Avot* 5:3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 33; B, 36; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 26; *Midrash Tehillim* 18:25; *Zohar* 1:82a; 3:138a.

39. **Great Love...** Hebrew, אהבה רבה (*ahavah rabbah*), a designation of *Ḥesed*. One who attains *Ḥesed* attains *Binah* (higher world). אהבת עולם (*Ahavat Olam*), "Eternal love," designates *Malkhut*.

Elsewhere in the *Zohar, Shekhinah* (*Malkhut*) is known as אהבה זוטא (*ahavah zuta*), "small love." See *Zohar* 1:11b, 181a;

2:254b, 256b, 260b (last three *Heikh*); *ZḤ* 52b. On *Malkhut* as eternal love, see *Zohar* 2:114a.

"All is one mystery" since both *Malkhut* and *Ḥesed* pertain to love.

The phrases *ahavah rabbah* and *ahavat olam* appear as variants at the start of the second blessing preceding the *Shema*. See BT *Berakhot* 11b.

40. **love transcends all the rites of the world...** See *Zohar* 3:267a: "There is no worship like the love of the blessed Holy One." Cf. Rumi, *Masnavi* 2:1770: "The sect of Love is distinct from all religions."

41. **seventh commandment...** *Tzitzit*, "tassel, fringe," one of four affixed to the hem of a garment, and later of a prayer shawl. See Numbers 15:37–41. Verse 38 reads: *They shall make for themselves a tassel on the hem* [or: *wing*] *of their garments for their generations and place on the tassel of the hem a thread of blue* [or: *bluish purple*]. According to the passage in Numbers, when one looks upon the *tzitzit*, one is reminded to perform the commandments. See BT *Menaḥot* 43b: "Seeing leads to remembering; and remembering, to doing." *Tzitzit* represents *Malkhut*, through whom the King—namely *Tif'eret*—acts; hence *tzitztit* is the king's sign. Alternatively, "sign of the King" might be construed more generally as "royal sign"; hence *tzitzit* is *Malkhut*'s sign.

On the significance of *tzitzit* in the *Zohar*, see 2:139a, 152a–b; *ZḤ* 84d–85a (MhN, *Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 17, 234; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 98–99; idem, *Shushan Edut*, 364–65; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1161–64. See also *Bahir* 65 (96); Naḥmanides on Numbers 15:31; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 67–70. On *tzitzit* as representing the divine female, see below, note 43. On "sign of the King," cf. *Bahir* 62 (93).

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 14.

On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1183–86.

42. **mystery of the medallion…** The ציץ (*tsits*), *medallion* (or *plate, rosette*), was a gold plate worn on the forehead of the high priest over his turban, bearing the inscription קדש ליהוה (*qodesh la-YHVH*), *Holy to YHVH*. See also Exodus 39:30. Here, the medallion represents the higher *sefirot*, apparently *Ḥokhmah* and/or *Binah* ("higher world"), which adorn and infuse the High Priest—a symbol for *Ḥesed* throughout the *Zohar*. According to rabbinic tradition, the medallion atoned for brazenness, leaving only "truthful countenances" in its presence. Here, the latter signify *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, which are reconciled in "truth"—that is, Jacob. In the *Zohar*, Jacob and truth symbolize *Tif'eret*, the central *sefirah* where the upper *sefirot* are combined. See Micah 7:20: *You give truth to Jacob*.

On the *tsits* as atoning for being brazenfaced, see JT *Yoma* 7:5, 44c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:6; BT *Zevaḥim* 88b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:1; *Zohar* 2:217b, 218b; *ZḤ* 67d (*ShS*). The *Zohar* connects the ציץ to the root צוץ (*tsuts*), "to look, peek, gaze." Cf. Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 28:37, and Rashbam and Baḥya ben Asher on 28:36, all of whom cite Song of Songs 2:9: מציץ (*metsits*), *peering, through the lattice*. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:78.

43. ***Tzitzit* is female…** On *tzitzit* as feminine associated with *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:141a; *ZḤ* 42a, 85a (*MhN Rut*). (See also Rabbi Meir's statement in the *Sifrei* cited in the next note.) The identification of the *tsits* as male would seem to suggest a correlation with *Ḥokhmah*—though the allusion may instead be to *Binah*, who in the *Zohar* is sometimes known as "world of the male." See below at note 184. "Lower world" denotes *Malkhut*. As with *tsits*, the *Zohar* associates *tzitzit* with gazing.

44. **hence the blue…** As indicated in Numbers 15:38, the dye תכלת (*tekhelet*), "blue" (or "bluish purple; violet"), was traditionally used to color one thread of the *tzitzit*. In the

Zohar, blue is usually associated with *Shekhinah*; here it is connected with another of Her symbols, the throne of glory (or judgment), which is imagined as lying beneath Her. Because one must not gaze upon *Shekhinah* Herself—symbolized by the *tzitzit*—the added blue thread serves to conceal *Shekhinah*. The *tekhelet* is thus the adornment of the *Shekhinah* (the House of David); and when one gazes upon the *tekhelet* of the *tzitzit*, one remembers the throne and is in awe of *Shekhinah* and Her powers of judgment.

On the prohibition of gazing upon *Shekhinah*, see BT *Ḥagigah* 16a: "'Whoever shows no concern for the honor [or: glory] of his Maker, it were better for him if he had not come into the world' (M *Ḥagigah* 2:1). What does this mean? Rabbi Abba said: 'It refers to one who gazes at the rainbow,'… for it is written: *Like the appearance of the bow in the cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the radiance all around—the appearance of the semblance of the glory of YHVH* (Ezekiel 1:28)." According to the *Zohar*, the colors of the rainbow convey the hidden sefirotic spectrum of *Shekhinah*.

See BT *Qiddushin* 40a; *Zohar* 1:1b, 71b, 72b, 117a, 232a; 2:66b, 99a; 3:84a, 260b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 364; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 336–40.

On colors in a dream, see BT *Berakhot* 57b: "All kinds of colors bode well in a dream, except blue." See *Zohar* 1:51b, 256a (*Hash*); 2:135a, 139a, 152a. On the color blue, the divine throne, and *Shekhinah*, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 115, in the name of Rabbi Meir: "Whoever fulfills the commandment of [wearing] the *tzitzit* is as though he greeted the face of *Shekhinah*, for the blue [the color of the thread on the garment's tassel] resembles the sea, and the sea resembles the sky, and the sky resembles the Throne of Glory."

See BT *Sotah* 17a, *Menaḥot* 43b; *Bahir* 65 (96); *Zohar* 1:260b (*Hash*); 2:139a, 149b, 152a–b. See also *Zohar* 1:51a; 3:33a (*RM*), 175b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*,

234. See especially idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 99, where *tekhelet* is described as a "throne" for the throne of David.

The *Zohar* may be linking תכלת (*tekhelet*) with the root כלה (*klh*), "to destroy."

See Psalms 122:5: *There stand thrones of judgment, thrones of the house of David*.

"Awe of *YHVH*" renders דחלא דיהוה (*daḥla de-YHVH*). In *Targum Onqelos*, this phrase renders יראת אלהים (*yir'at Elohim*), "fear of God," so perhaps the *Zohar* intends to distinguish between *daḥla de-YHVH* referring to the throne of *Shekhinah*, and יראת יהוה (*yir'at YHVH*) referring to *Shekhinah* herself.

45. **covering the other threads** As noted, the blue thread serves to cover the white tassels, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, thus enabling the *tzitzit* to be gazed upon; hence Scripture specifies that the blue is to be attached to the tassels themselves and not to the hem. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tzitzit* 1:2–3, 6–7.

46. **What is the connection?...** How is Amalek connected to *tzitzit*—as hinted by the word *remember*? Just as Amalek serves as a reminder of the consequence of sin and divine judgment, so do the blue and the *tzitzit*—which signify the throne and *Shekhinah*, the source of judgment. Fear of *Shekhinah* and Her judgment leads one to be saved and return to the right path.

On Amalek, see Exodus 17, where their attack comes on the heels of Israelite complaints. The Midrash compares them to a dog. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:9, in the name of Rabbi Levi: "This may be compared to a king who had a vineyard which he had enclosed with a fence and in which he had set a dog who was a biter. The king said, 'If anyone should come and breach the fence, the dog will bite him.' When the king's own son came and breached the fence, the dog bit him. Thereupon, whenever the king wished to remind his son of his sin—what he had done in the vineyard—he would say to him, 'Remember how the dog bit you!' So too, whenever the blessed Holy One wished to remind Israel

of their sin at Rephidim in querying one another *Is YHVH among us or not?* (Exodus 17:7), He would say to them, *Remember what Amalek did to you!"* See also *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 44; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 3; *Ki Tetse* 9; Rashi on Exodus 17:8.

On another occasion when the Israelites complained against God, He sent fiery serpents against them, and many of the people died. After Moses prayed to God, he was instructed: *Make you a fiery one, and set it on a standard, and so, then, whoever is bitten will see it and live* (Numbers 21:8). Moses made a bronze serpent and the wounded were thereby healed. According to the *Zohar*, the Israelites were not healed by the image itself, but by feeling the awe of God, which was prompted by gazing at the serpent—the divine lash of chastisement. Similarly, when one gazes upon the blue thread of *tzitzit*, this color inspires the awe of *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 2:152b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 99–100.

On the bronze serpent, see M *Rosh ha-Shanah* 3:8, which compares this miracle with Israel's victory over Amalek: "*When Moses would raise his hand, Israel prevailed*; [*when he would let down his hand, Amalek prevailed*] (Exodus 17:11). Now, could the hands of Moses wage battle or break [the power of Israel in] battle? Rather, this tells you: as long as Israel gazed above and subjugated their heart to their Father in heaven, they prevailed; otherwise, they fell. Similarly, you may say [regarding]: *Make you a fiery one, and set it on a standard, and so then, whoever is bitten will see it and live*. Now, did the serpent bring death or give life? Rather, when Israel gazed above and subjugated their heart to their Father in heaven, they were healed; otherwise, they would waste away."

On fear of the strap, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2, in the name of Rabbi Levi: "One who has been bitten by a snake—even a rope frightens him!"

In the manuscripts, the father's rebuke reads: "Remember when the snake bit you!"

47. ***From the corner of the earth…*** Surprisingly, the unlikely verse from Isaiah encodes the mystery of *tzitzit*. First, the word כנף (*kanaf*), "corner," is connected with the *kanaf*, "hem, corner, wing," of the garment to which the *tzitzit* are attached (see Numbers 15:38). The *tzitzit* are *of the earth*, i.e., associated with *Shekhinah*, symbolized by earth. Secondly, זמירות (*zemirot*), "songs," is read as זמורות (*zemurot*), "tendrils, shoots, sprouts," signifying the white tassels (other threads, i.e., other than the blue thread). While the *tzitzit* as a whole are associated with *Shekhinah*, the thirty-two threads in the tassels on the four corners are correlated with the thirty-two paths of wisdom deriving from *Ḥokhmah* (the supernal place, Wisdom). The paths of influence are "Glory to the righteous," meaning that they flow into Righteous One (*Yesod*), from where they are channeled into *Shekhinah*, the doubled intertwined threads of the *tzitzit*—signifying the twin aspects of *Shekhinah*, blending right and left, love (or compassion) and judgment. The remainder of the verse is expounded as a polemic against those who recite the *Shema* without adorning themselves in *tzitzit*—which, though not a halakhic requirement, is viewed as essential by the *Zohar*, since the *Shema* itself contains the commandment of *tzitzit*, so reciting it unadorned would be hypocritical.

On the thirty-two tassels of the *tzitzit* as corresponding to the thirty-two paths of wisdom (*Ḥokhmah*), see *Bahir* 62 (92–93); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 234; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 99; idem, *Shushan Edut*, 364. On the thirty-two paths, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1. On the double threads, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 115; Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 11, and Joseph Caro, *Beit Yosef*, ad loc.; idem, *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 11:2; cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tzitzit* 1:10.

See BT *Berakhot* 14b, in the name of Ulla: “Whoever recites the *Shema* without *tefillin* is as though he bore false witness against himself.” See *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *u-manaḥ*, according to whom the same is not true regarding *tzitzit*. See also *Zohar* 3:265a; [Moses de León?], *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, §14.

“Righteous One, Vitality of the Worlds” indicates *Yesod*, who channels the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah* and the worlds below. The designation “Righteous One” is based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). The verse literally means *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, but it is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34. On the various senses of the title “Vitality of the Worlds,” see Daniel 4:31; 12:7; Ben Sira 18:1; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 16; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:5; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Heikhalot-Literatur*, §275; *Bahir* 123 (180); *Zohar* 1:4b, 6a, 18a, 132a, 135b, 164a, 167b, 193b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55–56 (68).

On *tzitzit* as passport to the world that is coming, cf. BT *Menaḥot* 43b, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai: “Whoever is diligent with this commandment merits receiving the face of *Shekhinah*.”

On the verse from Isaiah, see also *Zohar* 3:284a–b.

48. **eighth commandment…** *Tefillin* (“phylacteries”) consist of two black leather boxes containing passages from the Torah (Exodus 13:1–10, 11–16; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21) written on parchment. They are bound by black leather straps on the left arm and on the head, and are worn during weekday morning services. Each of the biblical passages indicates that the Israelites should place a “sign” upon their hand and a “frontlet” (or “reminder”) between their eyes. In the *tefillah* of the hand, all four passages are written on one piece of parchment in the order of their occurrence in the Torah. The *tefillah* of the head, however, is divided into four compartments; and each of the four

passages, written on a separate piece of parchment, is inserted in one compartment.

By wearing *tefillin* one imitates God, who Himself wears *tefillin*. See below, note 61.

The commandment of *tefillin* was widely disregarded in France and Spain in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The *Zohar*, seeking to reinforce the commitment to this *mitsvah*, emphasizes its mystical significance. The two *tefillin* (on the head and the arm) symbolize *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*; and by wearing them faithfully, one unites the divine couple.

See *Tosafot, Shabbat* 49a, s.v. *ke-elisha ba'al kenafayim*; Isaac the Blind, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 4; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 525; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 4; Naḥmanides on Exodus 13:16; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod, Berakhot* 6a; *Zohar* 1:13b–14a, 129a–b (*MhN*), 132b, 141a, 147a, 168b; 2:119b (*RM*), 162a; 3:81a, 140a (*IR*), 175b, 236b (*RM*), 262a–263a, 264a–b, 269a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 17, 236–40; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 61–66; Baer, *History*, 1:250; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1161–65.

In the *Haqdamah* of the *Zohar*, the commandment to don *tefillin* is listed as the tenth commandment. See *Zohar* 1:13b–14a. See also Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandments nos. 12 and 13.

On *tefillin* as פאר (*pe'era*), "glory," see BT *Berakhot* 11a, which applies the directive in Ezekiel 24:17—*Wrap* פארך (*phe'erekha*), *your turban*—to *tefillin*. The noun פאר (*pe'er*), *turban*, is a homonym of פאר (*pe'er*), "glory." See *Zohar* 2:62a–b.

The full verse in Isaiah 49 reads: *He said to me, "You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory."* On its association with *tefillin*, see *Zohar* 2:62a–b; 3:55a, 265a; *ZḤ* 41d. אתפאר (*Etpa'ar*), "*I glory,*" recalls *Tif'eret*, so perhaps the verse is to be understood as spoken by *Shekhinah*, who is declaring: You are My servant Israel, in whom I have been united with *Tif'eret*. According to Cordovero in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, the verse is

spoken by *Ḥokhmah* to *Tif'eret*, and according to Galante, it is spoken by *Tif'eret* to Israel.

"Beauty of supernal colors" refers to various sefirotic colors, which are associated with *tefillin*, as explained in the following paragraphs.

On *tefillin* as "holiness," see BT *Megillah* 26b; *Zohar* 2:201b, 215b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 58; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 100.

The plural noun טוטפות (*totafot*) is of uncertain meaning; it is usually understood to mean "symbol, sign, frontlet, circlet." See Exodus 13:16; Deuteronomy 6:8, 11:18. According to BT *Shabbat* 57a–b, the singular noun טוטפת (*totefet*) denotes an article of jewelry, apparently a headband of sorts worn by women.

49. **Israel the Junior; Israel the Elder...** The *tefillin* of the arm and head signify the divine female and male respectively. The verse from Hosea refers to Metatron, the son of *Shekhinah*, named here Israel the Junior, whereas Israel the Elder refers here to *Yesod*, the phallus of the divine male. Just as Joseph matured from youth to righteous, attaining the rung of the divine female and the divine male, so in donning *tefillin* the kabbalist effectuates and experiences a similar maturation—from "youth" (Metatron, associated with *Shekhinah*) to "righteous" (*Yesod*)—generating the sexual union of the male and female divine potencies. Additionally, if Joseph's ascent is construed in the present tense (which the *Zohar*'s Aramaic allows here), then the description of his maturation might also describe the sexual ripening of *Yesod* itself (accomplished by laying *tefillin*) from "youth" (prior to sexual union) to "righteous" (after union with *Shekhinah*). For various interpretations, see *Matoq mi-Devash, Sullam*, Cordovero in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc.

"Israel the Junior" (or "Israel the Small") refers to the chief angel Metatron, who is often called נער (*na'ar*), "youth." On this title, see *Zohar* 2:216a; *ZḤ* 56d (*QhM*); *TZ, Haqdamah*, 14a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42–43

(51). On Metatron as "youth," see 3 Enoch 4:10; BT *Yevamot* 16b; *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *pasuq zeh*; *Zohar* 2:66a, 277b. On the verse from Hosea as related to Metatron, see also 1:223b; 2:278a–b; 3:277a (*RM*).

In midrashic literature the title "Israel the Elder" refers to Israel the patriarch (Jacob), as opposed to the people called Israel. Here, it apparently designates *Yesod* who shares this title with *Tif'eret*. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11; *Zohar* 1:233a; 2:4a, 160b, 216a; 3:262b–263a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42–43 (51).

On Joseph as "youth," see Genesis 37:2. In rabbinic literature, Joseph is granted the title Righteous in recognition of his resisting the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife. See Genesis 39; BT *Yoma* 35b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 93:7; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim*, 460. Cf. *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 5 and *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38, which cite Amos 2:6.

According to Kabbalah, because of his sexual purity Joseph attained the level of *Yesod*, the divine phallus and site of the covenant. On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, note 47.

50. ***upright and good...*** Signifying the *tefillin* of the arm and head, the divine female and male, respectively. Donning *tefillin* unifies the divine couple. According to the *Zohar*, sexual union must begin with arousal of the female, and so the *tefillah* of the arm is donned first.

On first placing the *tefillah* of the arm, and on not pausing (or speaking) between putting on the two sets of *tefillin*, see BT *Menaḥot* 36a, *Sotah* 44b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin* 4:5–6. See also *Zohar* 1:168b, 205b; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 73–79.

51. **two mysteries... servant... son...** The *tefillah* of the arm, signifying *Malkhut*, corresponds with "youth" and with the rung of "servant," whereas the *tefillah* of the head, signifying *Tif'eret*, corresponds with "righteous" and the rung of "son." As noted above at *Zohar* 3:111b–112a (*Piq*; pp.

217–18 and nn. 16–19), the kabbalist is expected to attain the rung of “servant” and “son”—aligned with the divine female and male respectively, the general and the particular.

52. **four compartments… single compartment…** As noted above, the *tefillah* of the head contains the four biblical passages on separate pieces of parchment that are housed in four separate compartments. As explained below, these correspond to the four *sefirot Ḥokhmah, Binah, Ḥesed*, and *Gevurah*. In contrast, the *tefillah* of the hand contains all four passages on a single piece of parchment. As the *tefillah* of the hand signifies *Shekhinah*, this arrangement is apt since She possesses nothing of Her own and receives the flow of emanation all at one time from above. See *Zohar* 1:14a, 168b; 2:162a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 239.

The exact order of the biblical passages in the *tefillah* of the head was a matter of dispute during the era of the Second Temple; and in the twelfth century, this dispute was renewed. According to Rashi, they are inserted in the order of their occurrence in the Torah, whereas according to his grandson Rabbenu Tam, the passage from Deuteronomy 11:13–21 precedes that of Deuteronomy 6:4–9. See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 18; BT *Menaḥot* 34b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin* 3:5–6. The *Zohar* here follows Rashi and Maimonides.

The verse from Ecclesiastes describes the flow of emanation from the sefirotic heights into the sea of *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:19b, 29a, 33a, 52a, 235a, 238b; 2:30a, 50b, 220a; 3:43a, 58a.

The description of *Malkhut* (*Shekhinah*) as possessing nothing of Her own derives from a medieval astronomic description of the moon. See Radak on Genesis 1:16; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 338; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 381; *Zohar* 1:20a, 31a, 39b (*Heikh*), 132b, 168b, 181a, 238a; 2:142a, 218b.

On the final phrase “Consummate Kingdom of Heaven,” see BT *Berakhot* 14b–15a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “One who wishes to accept upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven completely, should relieve himself, wash his hands, don *tefillin*, recite the *Shema*, and pray—this constitutes the complete acknowledgment of the Kingdom of Heaven.” According to the *Zohar* here, the *tefillah* of the hand, representing *Malkhut* (Kingdom), is joined with the *tefillah* of the head, representing *Tif’eret* (known as Heaven)—yielding “Kingdom of Heaven.” The *tefillah* of the hand receives its holiness (and indeed its name) from its association with the *tefillah* of the head, which in turn is associated with Holiness above, namely the *sefirah Ḥokhmah*. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 101.

53. **first portion…** Though pertaining specifically to the second *sefirah Ḥokhmah*—the sublime radiance emanating from Nothingness, namely the first primordial *sefirah Keter*—the opening phrase of the first biblical passage in the *tefillah* of the head also intimates the sefirotic correlations of all four biblical passages, as explained in the following paragraph.

The verse continues: *—breacher of every womb among the Children of Israel, of human or beast—it is Mine*. On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:13b; 3:262a, 269a.

On the significance of the four biblical passages in the *tefillin*, see the sources cited in note 48 at the beginning of this *piqquda*. See also Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1162. See especially, Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 236–38; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 102–3. On wisdom’s (*ḥokhmah*’s) connection with nothingness, see Job 28:12: והחכמה מאין תמצא (*ve-ha-ḥokhmah me-ayin timatse*), *Wisdom, whence does she come?* The phrase can be rendered more literally: *Wisdom comes from nothingness*.

54. **the verse includes all four…** The phrase לי כל בכור קדש (*Qaddesh li kol bekhor*), *Hallow to Me every firstborn*, encodes the sefirotic significance of each of the four biblical

passages in the *tefillin*: *Ḥokhmah, Binah, Ḥesed*, and *Tif'eret* respectively. In effect, all the *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* through *Yesod* are alluded to in this opening clause.

First, *Qodesh* signifies *Ḥokhmah*, in turn connected to the supernal concealment, designating *Keter*. (On *Qodesh*, see below, pages 241–42).

Second, the letter ל (*lamed*), of לִי (*li*), *to Me*, the tallest letter of the alphabet—the "tower soaring in the air"—signifies *Binah*. On *lamed*'s association with the soaring tower and *Binah*, see Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 89–90 (112–14); *Zohar* 1:6a and Matt's note 251 (Vol. 1, p. 36); *ZḤ* 66a–b (*ShS*). Additionally, *lamed* has the numerical value of thirty, pointing to *Binah*, the third *sefirah*; and in the cited verse it is attached to י (*yod*), signifying *Ḥokhmah*.

Third, the word *kol*, "all, every," refers here to *Ḥesed*, the boundless source of divine love. (Usually it designates *Yesod*.)

Finally, *bekhor*, "firstborn," alludes to *Tif'eret* (whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el*), the prototype male and the son of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*; as such, it represents the six central male *sefirot*, including *Gevurah* (see below).

55. **second portion…** The second portion pertains to *Binah* for two reasons. First, the portion mentions the Exodus from Egypt, which in the *Zohar* is associated with *Binah*. Second, the portion begins with the word והיה (*ve-hayah*), *it shall be*, intimating the future and becoming, which is apt for *Binah*—the source of the divine unfolding, where the inner essences of divinity begin to take shape and emerge (whereas in *Ḥokhmah* and *Keter* they are still undifferentiated and hidden). *Binah*'s flow illuminates the other *sefirot* and culminates in the lowest rung, *Shekhinah*. Even so, *Binah* remains concealed: Her name והיה (*ve-hayah*) is not known by all. Alternatively, because She remains concealed, *Binah* is not known by the usual four-letter name יהוה (*YHVH*), and it is for the kabbalists to fathom how והיה becomes its anagram יהוה as the full sefirotic field is constructed. See Cordovero and Galante in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc.

According to the Bible, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). After seven Sabbaticals, in the fiftieth year, comes the Jubilee, when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus 25:8–55). In Kabbalah, the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah*, who in general is characterized by the number fifty, based on BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, where Rav and Shemu'el teach: "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)." As Jubilee, *Binah* is the source of liberation, including the liberation from Egyptian bondage.

On *Binah* and the Exodus, see *Zohar* 1:13b, 21b; 2:46a, 68a, 83b, 85a–b, 121b; 3:262a, 269a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 237. On the Exodus from Egypt mentioned in this portion, see Exodus 13:14–15: *When, in the time to come, your son asks you, "What is this?"* [i.e., "Why are you setting apart to God the firstborn?"], *you shall say to him, "By strength of hand YHVH brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage…."* On *It shall be* as signifying the divine unfolding, cf. *Zohar* 3:65b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 98–99.

56. **third portion…** Containing the phrase *You shall love YHVH your God*, this portion pertains to the *sefirah Ḥesed*, "Love," the divine right arm. This divine attribute enacts unification to "four sides," apparently meaning that it is through *Ḥesed* that the divine left, right, male, and female are united; or perhaps that it is through *Ḥesed* that the *sefirot* around *Tif'eret* cohere. Through *Ḥesed*, God created and sustains the world—its influence extending to the farthest reaches. As the third portion of the *tefillin* lies next to the fourth (*It shall be if you indeed heed*), so *Ḥesed* is positioned next to *Gevurah*, to ameliorate its harshness. Alternatively, if *It shall be* refers to *Binah*, then their juxtaposition points to

Ḥesed as the first extension of *Binah*'s unfolding. See *Sullam, Matoq mi-Devash, Or ha-Ḥammah* for various interpretations.

On God's wrapping Himself in light to create the world, see *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va-yaqhel* 7: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Rabbi Yehotsadak asked Rabbi Shemu'el son of Naḥman, 'Since you are a master of *aggadah*, tell me how the blessed Holy One created the world.' He replied, 'When the blessed Holy One wished to create the world, He enwrapped Himself in light and created the world, as is said: *Wrapped in light as in a garment*, and afterward: *spreading the heavens like a curtain* (Psalms 104:2).'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:4 (and Theodor, ad loc.); *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:26; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 493–94; Ezra's letter, ed. Scholem, "Te'udah Ḥadashah," 157–58; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 110–11; *Zohar* 1:2a, 15b, 29a, 90a (*ST*), 245a; 2:39b, 164b.

See also Psalms 89:3: *I declare: "The world is built by love."* See *Zohar* 1:230b; 2:166b. Cf. the line in the morning liturgy: "Lord of wonders, who renews in His goodness every day continually the act of Creation."

"Supreme Love" renders חסד עלאה (*ḥesed ila'ah*), "upper *Ḥesed*," signifying the *sefirah Ḥesed*—perhaps in contrast to what is sometimes called "lower *Ḥesed*," signifying *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. See *Zohar* 1:219a; cf. 2:177b (*SdTs*); 3:133b (*IR*), 140b (*IR*).

57. **How are they one?...** As *Ḥesed* is the divine quality responsible for achieving unification, and as the third portion of the *tefillin* contains the *Shema*, the *Zohar* digresses to discuss the significance of the proclamation of divine unity: *Hear O Israel! YHVH, our God, YHVH is one*. The proclamation contains three epithets for God: "*YHVH*," "our God," and "*YHVH*"—providing an opening for a Trinitarian reading, and so the *Zohar* wonders how this trinity is in fact a unity.

On the *Shema* in the *Zohar*, see 3:263a (*Piq*; above, p. 221 and n. 28).

58. **vision of the eye… three colors that are one…** The mystical unity of the sefirotic triad is revealed through the "vision of the eye," a mystical technique that involves closing the eyes and rotating the eyeball to produce a vision of colors. The three names are a unity, just as a unity is formed by the three aspects comprising human voice: fire, air, and water (warm, moist breath)—which correlate with the three central *sefirot, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Ḥesed*. Throughout the *Zohar*, "voice" signifies *Tif'eret*—the central *sefirah* that blends the qualities of the right and left.

For similar treatments of the divine names in the *Shema*, see *Zohar* 2:133b, 160b, 162a; 3:162a. For a nearly identical solution to the Trinitarian problem, see Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 82 (104–05), 104 (132); idem, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 27. See also idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 5b. On the "embarrassment" caused by Trinitarian formulations in kabbalistic texts, see Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 103–06 (131–135). On this passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:972–73; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 140–41; Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 21–22.

On the technique of rolling the eyeball, see *Zohar* 2:23b: "The secret is: close your eye and roll your eyeball. Those colors that shine and sparkle will be revealed." See *Zohar* 1:18b, 42a, 43a–b (last two *Heikh*), 97a–b (*ST*); 2:69a, 247a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 63b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 96–97 (123–24); idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67; Scholem, "Colours and Their Symbolism," 66–67; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 291–93; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 380–83.

59. **Many nuances of unification have been aroused…** The *Zohar* presents various interpretations of the unification that is accomplished through the opening line of the *Shema*. All of the varied mystical intentions are acceptable and effective, though this one here is best of all.

On the *Shema* and its interpretations, see above, note 28; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:972.

The sentence "One who enacts this effectuates; and one who enacts that effectuates" might also be rendered more literally as "One who does this does [fine], and one who does that does [fine]," meaning that a person may follow whichever mystical intention he pleases. On this "pluralism" in mystical intention, see below, p. 243 and n. 68.

On the final phrase "This is in general," see *Zohar* 2:162a which describes the opening line of the *Shema* as explaining the unification "in general," followed by its paragraphs which explain the unification "in particular." A similar idea is intended here, since in the following paragraph the *Zohar* returns to discuss the fourth portion of the *tefillin*, which is correlated with *Gevurah*, "Judgment"—even though the unification of the *sefirot* in general is found in the third section of the *tefillin*, which contains the *Shema* and has already been discussed.

60. **fourth portion... strict judgment...** As noted, the fourth biblical passage in the *tefillin* of the head symbolizes *Gevurah*, since the passage discusses punishments consequent upon disobedience. Verses 16 and 17 read: *Watch yourselves, lest your heart be seduced and you swerve and worship other gods and bow to them. For YHVH's wrath will flare up against you, and He will hold back the heavens so that there will be no rain and the soil will not yield its produce and you will perish swiftly from the good land that YHVH is about to give you*.

I have followed the reading in O21.

61. **abiding in the supernal image...** In wearing *tefillin*, one imitates God and reflects the divine, who also wears *tefillin*. See BT *Berakhot* 6a: "Rabbi Avin son of Rabbi Adda said in the name of Rabbi Yitsḥak, 'How do we know that the blessed Holy One puts on *tefillin*? For it is said: *YHVH has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength* (Isaiah 62:8). *By His right hand*—this is Torah, as is said: *At*

His right hand was a fiery law unto them (Deuteronomy 33:2). *And by the arm of His strength*—this is *tefillin*, as is said: *YHVH will give strength unto His people* (Psalms 29:11). How do we know that *tefillin* are a strength to Israel? For it is written: *All the peoples of the earth shall see that the name of YHVH is proclaimed upon you, and they shall be in awe of you* (Deuteronomy 28:10), and it has been taught: Rabbi Eli'ezer the Great says, "This refers to the *tefillin* of the head."' Rabbi Naḥman son of Yitsḥak asked Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Avin, 'These *tefillin* of the Master of the Universe—what is written in them?' He replied, '*Who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on earth*? (1 Chronicles 17:21).' "

This and the following paragraph appear to be in disarray. I have followed the manuscript witnesses and first printed editions.

62. **knot of the *tefillin* of the head...** See BT *Berakhot* 7a (and *Menaḥot* 35b), in the name of Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid on the verse from Exodus: "This teaches us that the blessed Holy One showed Moses the knot of *tefillin* [at the back of God's head]." The knot is in the shape of the letter ד (*dalet*), which in the *Zohar* can symbolize *Shekhinah*—who prior to receiving the rich flow of emanation from above is דלה (*dallah*), "poor," though She is ultimately the site where all converges.

On Moses seeing the knot of God's *tefillin*, see *Zohar* 2:230a–b; 3:263a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 238–39. The full verse in Exodus reads: *I will take away My palm and you will see My back, but My face will not be seen*.

The sentence "When She dons the *tefillin* of the arm, another is bound, mystery of holy covenant" appears to describe *Shekhinah*, who in donning *tefillin* is bound to *Yesod*, the divine phallus. Whereas the knot of the *tefillah* of the head is pictured as the letter ד (*dalet*), the knot of the *tefillah* of the hand is pictured as the letter י (*yod*). The *tefillah* of the hand symbolizes *Shekhinah*; and its knot—the letter י (*yod*)—

symbolizes *Yesod*. See *Zohar* 3:236b. On *Shekhinah* wearing *tefillin*, see 3:263a; cf. 1:147a; 3:258a (*RM*), 262b–263a.

On the knots in the shape of *dalet* and *yod*, see BT *Shabbat* 62a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin* 3:13.

63. **ninth commandment…** Through the recitation of the *Qedushah*. The *Qedushah* (Sanctification) appears three times in the morning liturgy: once before the *Shema*—when the angels' recitation *of Holy, holy, holy…* is described; again during the repetition of the *Amidah*—when the angels join Israel in sanctifying God; and then again in the prayer "A redeemer shall come to Zion" after the *Amidah*. The main *Qedushah* is recited during the repetition of the morning and afternoon *Amidah*. The central components of the *Qedushah* are Isaiah 6:3: *Holy, holy, holy is YHVH of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory*; Ezekiel 3:12: *Blessed be the glory of YHVH from His place*; and Psalms 146:10: *YHVH will be king forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Hallelujah*. In their original context, both Isaiah 6:3 and Ezekiel 3:12 are proclaimed by angels on high.

In reciting the *Qedushah*, the divine realm is stimulated so that holiness and divine activity spread—through *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (the Fathers); onward to *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod* (the Sons); and on to *Shekhinah*. The "three rungs" below refer to the triple "holy" recited by Israel; the "three rungs" above, to the impact of the *Qedushah* in three different realms of the *sefirot*, as explained in what follows. Alternatively (or perhaps additionally), the "three rungs" above refer to the Fathers, and the "three rungs" below to the Sons.

On the *Qedushah*, see BT *Ḥullin* 91b; *Bahir* 89 (128); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 56–57; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 149–52; *Zohar* 2:52a, 121b, 129a–b, 132b–133a, 217a, 247b (*Heikh*); 3:190b, 297a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 15, 89–91 (and Wolfson's notes); idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 103–5 (131–34); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 5b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*,

3:968–69, 1030–33 on this *piqquda*. On the verse from Leviticus, see *Zohar* 2:129b, 133a; see also BT *Berakhot* 21b. On this entire *piqquda*, see Cordovero's commentary in *Or ha-Ḥammah*. On reciting the *Qedushah* every day, cf. *Massekhet Soferim* 20:7; *Tosafot*, BT *Sanhedrin* 37b, s.v. *mi-kanaf ha-arets*; see *Nitsotsei Zohar*, note 2, ad loc.

Cf. Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 9.

64. **three rungs that are one** The term *Qedushah* refers to the Sanctification prayer; it also means "holiness." In the previous *piqquda*, the terms *qaddesh/qodesh/qedushah* were associated with *Ḥokhmah*, which is very high in the sefirotic realm (see above at note 54). Here, *qedushah* as "holiness" pertains on three tiers in the sefirotic field: high "above," as noted; in the "middle," namely the male *sefirot* of *Ḥesed* through *Yesod* and especially *Tif'eret*; and "below," in *Shekhinah*. The *qedushah* "above, beyond" is "in a single mystery" insofar as it is the source of the lower *qedushot* (plural of *qedushah*). The kabbalist's recitation of the *Qedushah* is directed toward and stimulates these three tiers.

On "three rungs that are one," see above, p. 238 and n. 58, regarding the Trinitarian formulations in the *Zohar*.

65. ***qodesh… qedushah…*** The divine flow expands from the hiddenness of *Ḥokhmah* to the sefirotic center, *Tif'eret*, which is signified by the letter ו (*vav*)—whose numerical value is six and hence designates the six central *sefirot*—and on to *Shekhinah*, which is symbolized by the letter ה (*he*), a feminine marker, and in particular by the last ה (*he*) in the divine name *YHVH*. The expansion through the three rungs engenders a tripartite configuration: קדש (*qodesh*)—pertaining to *Ḥokhmah*; קדוש (*qadosh*)—pertaining to *Tif'eret*; and קדושה (*qedushah*)—pertaining to *Shekhinah*. All three terms mean "holy" or "holiness," yet at the same time they mark three distinct tiers that are triggered by the Sanctification. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 89–90, for a nearly identical parallel; see also *Zohar* 3:297a.

Technically speaking, *Ḥokhmah* is the second *sefirah*, but *Keter*—the first primordial *sefirah*, the divine no-thingness—is so hidden and unknowable that sometimes *Ḥokhmah* is counted as the first.

The "narrow, hidden channel" designates the subtle connection between the point of *Ḥokhmah* and the womb of the divine mother, *Binah*. See *Zohar* 1:13b; 3:271a (*Piq*; below, page 262). Elsewhere in the *Zohar* (1:29b; 2:122b–123a; 3:61b), this pathway is known as *a path unknown to any vulture* (Job 28:7).

66. **ought to have been קדש (*qodesh*)...** Why is the formula *qadosh, qadosh, qadosh*? Given that the divine flow stimulated during the *Qedushah* derives from *Ḥokhmah*, symbolized by *qodesh*, the formula should reflect this point of origin. Moreover, how can *Ḥokhmah* be termed *qadosh*—which we have just said designates *Tif'eret* and the sefirotic center? Why not say: *Qadesh, qadosh, qedushah*? See *Zohar* 2:121b.

67. **the mystery is as follows...** The formula derived from the angels is perfect, since in reciting the *Qedushah* three different sefirotic grades attain the name *qadosh*—spelled with the letter *vav* (unlike *qodesh*). Through their recitation below, Israel raise upward the "supernal glory," which designates either the lower *sefirot* or (more likely) *Tif'eret* itself. The dynamic aspect of *Tif'eret*, symbolized by the letter *vav* and "Heavens," rises until it reaches *Ḥokhmah*, with the *vav* of *Tif'eret* transforming *qodesh* into *qadosh*—the first *qadosh* in the triple utterance. Energized by *Ḥokhmah, Tif'eret* returns to its abode—the second *qadosh*. Finally, *Yesod* (Righteous One), the conduit of divine flow from *Tif'eret* to *Shekhinah*, receives the flow from *Tif'eret*—the third *qadosh*. Thus, the triple *qadosh* of the verse correlates with the earlier configuration: *qodesh, qadosh, qedushah*. See Sobol, "Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin," 77–80 (on p. 79, she suggests that *Tif'eret*, the son, returns to father, *Ḥokhmah*, to receive his blessings before uniting with his partner, *Shekhinah*).

On Israel's sanctification as corresponding to the angels', see the opening of the *Qedushah* liturgical unit in the Sephardic rite: "We will sanctify You and revere You according to the pleasant words of the counsel of the holy *seraphim*, who triple sanctification before You, as is written by Your prophet: *One called to another, saying*."

68. **One who sets his aspiration upon this does well...** During the recitation of the *Qedushah*, the ideal mystical intention is as elaborated here, namely to draw down the divine flow through the three tiers of *Ḥokhmah, Tif'eret*, and *Yesod*, then onto *Shekhinah*. If this intention is too complex, the adept who "merely" focuses on unifying the triad of Fathers (*Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*) through the triple recitation of "holy"—thereby blending Love, Judgment, and Compassion—is also to be commended. On such "pluralism" in mystical intention, see above, page 239.

On the correspondence between the threefold formula *Holy, holy, holy* and the triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, see Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 151 (in the name of Isaac the Blind); *Zohar* 2:52a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 90.

See BT *Berakhot* 34b: "One who is praying should focus his heart during all of them [i.e., the prayers]; but if he is unable to focus during all of them, he should focus his heart during one... [namely] the Fathers [the name of the first blessing in the *Amidah*]."

69. **At what point should a person sanctify himself...** If the purpose of the *Qedushah* is to draw down holiness upon the adept, at what precise point in the liturgy does this happen? When does the holiness "jump" from above to the individual? According to a view found in the books of the ancients, this happens when one says *YHVH of hosts*, with *hosts* understood as including the human hosts in prayer. The second and preferred view, however, is that the phrase *YHVH of hosts* does not refer to the individual, but rather to the *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Hod*; and thus this phrase is

said “on its own,” namely for its own sake. Further, it is only when one recites the second phrase from the verse in Isaiah, *the whole earth is full of His glory*—which signifies the divine presence, *Shekhinah*—that one should include oneself within the descending holiness.

The final section of the paragraph beginning “Afterward, he should enact in particular” is obscure and the syntax uncertain. Enacting “in particular” may denote focusing on individual *sefirot*, or perhaps that the adept—having drawn down the divine flow to *Malkhut*—now focuses on drawing it upon himself in particular. For various interpretations, see Cordovero in *Or ha-Ḥammah*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; and Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1032. Whatever the precise meaning, Israel’s theurgic task corresponds with that of the angels, who also draw down divine bounty from the “supernal glory”—presumably designating *Ḥokhmah*, whose place is fixed (though *Binah* and *Tif’eret* are also possible referents)—to the lower glory, *Shekhinah*.

The word לעומתם (*le’ummatam*), rendered here as “corresponding to,” appears in the *Qedushah*, where it means “facing them”—describing the second group of angels that faces the first, and that responds to the “Holy, holy, holy” with “Blessed be the glory….”

The verse from Exodus discusses the *mishkan*, the portable desert sanctuary, which is sanctified by the divine presence. On the verse from Ezekiel, see *Zohar* 2:207a.

For other references to “books of the ancients,” one of the many sources housed in the real or imagined library of the author(s) of the *Zohar*, see *Zohar* 1:10a, 34b, 41a (*Heikh*), 180b, 184a, 220a, 234b; 2:35a, 95b, 239a; 3:6b, 10a, 19a, 26b, 249b, 258b, 288a (*IZ*).

70. **Book of Rav Yeisa Sava…** According to this venerable source, the three verses of the *Qedushah* pertain respectively to the following: *Tif’eret* (“Written Torah”)—also comprising *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* and hence the triple *holy*; *Netsaḥ*

and *Hod* ("prophets")—also including *Yesod*, and together comprising the *glory of YHVH* (*Tif'eret*), who are blessed with the divine flow; and finally *Malkhut*, meaning Kingdom (*will be king*). These three grades are summarized by "holiness, blessing, and kingdom."

Netsaḥ, Hod, and *Yesod* are "facing" or opposite *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. In the weekday *Qedushah*, between "Holy, Holy, Holy…" and "Blessed be the glory of *YHVH*…" the cantor recites: "Facing them, they praise saying."

The Book of Rav Yeisa Sava is mentioned also in *Zohar* 3:95b. C12 reads Yeiva Sava, whose book is mentioned more frequently in the *Zohar*. See *Zohar* 1:47b, 79b, 117b; 2:6a, 60b, 206b; 3:7b, 155b, 289a (*IZ*), 290a (*IZ*), 295a (*IZ*).

See Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, 1:22d: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*… have been lost in the wanderings of exile…. Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*." For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

71. **tenth commandment…** The *Shema* contains three sections: *Hear O Israel!* (Deuteronomy 6:4–9); *It shall be if you indeed heed* (Deuteronomy 11:13–21); and *YHVH said* (Numbers 15:37–41).

The morning recitation corresponds with the "rung of day," *Tif'eret*; the evening recitation, with the "rung of night," *Malkhut*. The two recitations thus signify (and accomplish) the union of the male and female potencies within divinity. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 17, 98.

In BT *Berakhot* 11b, Rava and Abbaye indicate that light is mentioned in the evening prayers, and darkness in the morning prayers, "in order to mention the quality of day during the night, and the quality of night during the day." See *Zohar* 1:12b, 120b, 259a (*Hash*); 2:162a; 3:260b, 264a.

On the *Shema*, see *Zohar* 3:263a (*Piq*; above, p. 221 and n. 28). See also Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Qri'at*

Shema 1:1–2; idem, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 10.

72. **eleventh commandment…** *Mezuzah*, literally "doorpost," is a small piece of parchment on which are inscribed the first two paragraphs of the *Shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4–9, 11:13–21). The parchment is rolled tightly, placed in a small case, and affixed to the doorposts in the home. On the outside of the scroll is the divine name שדי (*Shaddai*). According to the *Zohar*, the *mezuzah* banishes malicious forces and שדים (*shedim*), "demons."

The "entrance above, the rung… *Shomer*" alludes to *Malkhut*, who is positioned at the entrance of the sefirotic realm. As the *mezuzah* protects the inhabitants of the house, so *Malkhut* protects the divine realm from the demonic powers. *Malkhut* is known as *Guardian of Israel* (Psalms 121:4), i.e., guardian of Israel above (*Tif'eret Yisra'el*) and Israel below. In the material world, She is represented by the *mezuzah*. Cf. *Zohar* 3:257a (*RM*).

On the apotropaic role of the *mezuzah*, see Exodus 12:23; BT *Avodah Zarah* 11a (cited below); *Shabbat* 32b; *Tosafot, Shabbat* 22a, s.v. *rav amar*; *Zohar* 3:76b, 238a (*RM*), 265b, 266a–267a; *ZḤ* 84d (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon* 231–32. See also David ben Judah he-Ḥasid, *Mar'ot ha-Tsove'ot*, 70; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 71–2. According to *ZḤ* 85a (*MhN, Rut*), the word מזוזת (*mezuzot*, which is the plural of *mezuzah*, spelled deficiently) is an anagram of זז מות (*zaz mavet*), "move death" or "death moves." See also *TZ* 22, 66a.

A Talmudic legend relates that when Onqelos converted to Judaism, the Roman emperor sent a series of contingents of Roman soldiers to bring him back. As described in BT *Avodah Zarah* 11a, on the third attempt (after two contingents were themselves induced to convert), "they took hold of him; and as they were walking on, he saw the *mezuzah* that was affixed to the doorway. He placed his hand on it, saying to them, 'What is this?' They replied, 'Tell us.'

He said, 'According to universal custom, the mortal king dwells within, and his servants guard him outside; but [in the case of] the blessed Holy One, it is His servants who dwell within while He guards them outside, as is said: *YHVH will guard your going and your coming, now and forever*.' They converted. [The emperor] sent for him no more."

In the Gaonic period, customs developed to write the names of angels and various obscure divine names on the outer side of the *mezuzah* to further ensure protection. The protective uses of the *mezuzah* became a controversial topic in halakhic discussions of the 12th and 13th centuries; see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin u-Mezuzah ve-Sefer Torah* 5:4 and *Haggahot Maimoniyyot*, ad loc., n. 4; Asher ben Yeḥiel, "Hilkhot Mezuzah," 18; Joseph Caro, *Beit Yosef, Yoreh De'ah* 288, s.v. *katav*; Moses Isserles, *Darkhei Moshe*, ad loc., nn. 3–4. See Aptowitzer, "Les Noms de Dieu et des anges dans la Mezouza," REJ 60, 39–52 and REJ 65, 54–60; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 146–52; Gordon, "*Mezuzah*: Protective Amulet or Religious Symbol."

The preceding verse from Psalms reads: *YHVH will guard you from all evil; He will guard your life*.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 15; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 17.

On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1188–90. See *Zohar* 2:41a (*Piq*; below, pages 288 and 289).

73. ***Mezuzah*—totality of male and female as one** The simple purpose of the *mezuzah*, as with the *tzitzit*, is to serve as a reminder of God and the commandments. (On the *tzitzit*, see above, note 41.) On a deeper level, מזוזה (*mezuzah*) represents *Malkhut*, though the two scriptural passages within it signify the union of male and female. Furthermore, the word itself contains זו (*zu*) and זה (*zeh*), the feminine and masculine forms of the demonstrative pronoun ("this"),

respectively. (The letter מ (*mem*) may allude to *Binah*, their mother; see, e.g., *Zohar* 2:135a.) See *ZḤ* 85a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 232. On the masculine and feminine demonstrative pronouns (*zeh* and *zot*), see *Zohar* 1:93b; 2:37b, 39b, 50b; 3:31a, 250a.

74. **demon stands poised...** On the right hand side of the doorway is the *mezuzah*, representing the side of holiness —two rungs, *Malkhut* and *Tif'eret*; on the left, a demon awaits.

The two functions of the *mezuzah*—apotropaic and a reminder—are in fact one. A person who enters the house and sees the *mezuzah* will recall (or perhaps mention the name of) the blessed Holy One (in this case *Shaddai*) and thereby be protected from the demon (*shed*). On *adkar* as "recall, remember, mention," see above, note 3. Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin u-Mezuzah ve-Sefer Torah* 6:13. See *Zohar* 3:266b.

The Book of King Solomon is one of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the authors of the *Zohar*. For other references to this book, see *Zohar* 1:7b, 13b, 225b; 2:67a, 70a (*RR*), 125a, 139a, 172a, 204b; 3:10b, 65b, 70b, 104a, 151b, 164a, 193b, 295b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 12b (*MhN*), 17c (*MhN*). Naḥmanides several times refers to, and quotes from, an Aramaic version of the Apocryphal book called Wisdom of Solomon. See the introduction to his *Commentary on the Torah*, 5–6; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:163, 182; Liebes, *Pulḥan ha-Shaḥar*, 63–65. On the numerous scientific and magical books attributed to King Solomon, see *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:956–57.

See Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, 1:22d: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*... have been lost in the wanderings of exile.... Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*." For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

75. **when a person ventures out...** This arrangement appears to work only upon entering a house. What happens

when one leaves and the parties' relative positions are reversed—the demonic forces now on the right, and the *mezuzah*, the aspect of holiness, on the left? Can the demon really inhabit the right side, which is the domain of the holy? Is the *mezuzah* still effective when on the left?

76. **Two degrees inhere in the human being…** On the idea that everything is drawn to its own kind, see BT *Bava Qamma* 92b: "It was taught in the Mishnah: 'Anything attached to something that is subject to impurity is itself subject to impurity. Anything attached to something that remains pure will itself remain pure.' It was taught in a *baraita* [a Tannaitic teaching not included in the Mishnah]: Rabbi Eli'ezer said, 'Not for nothing did the starling follow the raven, but because it is of its kind.'" See *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:3; *Zohar* 1:20b, 126b, 137b, 167b; 2:141a; *ZḤ* 18b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal* 46; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 39 (see Wolfson notes, ad loc.); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 6a.

On the relative positions of the good and evil impulses, see BT *Berakhot* 61a: "Our Rabbis taught: The human being has two kidneys; one prompts him to good, the other to evil. It is natural to suppose that the good one is on his right side and the evil one on his left, as is said: *A wise man's heart* [or: *understanding*] *is at his right; a fool's heart* [or: *understanding*] *at his left* (Ecclesiastes 10:2)." See *Zohar* 1:49b, 144b, 155b, 165b, 174b.

77. **filth and dirt…** Filth and foul waters are an insult to the name of God found on the *mezuzah*, and they empower the demonic realm. See *Zohar* 3:265b; cf. 1:184b. See also BT *Pesaḥim* 111a; *Berakhot* 25a; Joseph Caro, *Shulḥan Arukh, Yoreh De'ah* 286:4–5.

78. **protect him against their will…** The presence of the *mezuzah* transforms the demonic maleficent powers into agents of holiness and protection.

On demonic powers' laying their hands upon a person's head, see *Zohar* 3:267a; cf. BT *Ta'anit* 11a; *Shabbat* 119b

describing the two angels that accompany a person.

79. **twelfth commandment…** The act of swearing an oath truthfully maintains *Shekhinah* in Her place—connected to the *sefirot* above Her. Conversely, a false oath disrupts Her union.

The seven *sefirot* beneath *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*, are often treated as a unit. Here they are also imagined as comprising the divine name *YHVH*. In swearing truthfully, one is bound with them. Even if one discounts *Shekhinah* from this tally, leaving only the six central male *sefirot* grouped around *Tif'eret* (signified specifically by *YHVH*, the name of the blessed Holy One), the septet is made complete by the one adjuring—who stands for *Shekhinah*, the court in the upper world. Thus, the mystery of the oath does indeed pertain to seven rungs.

On the wordplay *shevu'ah-sheva*, "oath"-"seven," and its connection with *Shekhinah* (the seventh rung below *Binah*), see *Zohar* 1:112b, 204b, which expound Deuteronomy 10:20 (*by His name you shall swear*) as follows: *His name* alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is known as *name* because She reveals the divine identity. See Asher ben David, *Peirush ha-Shevu'ot*, 205–8; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 538; Naḥmanides on Numbers 30:3; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 221–22, for a particularly close parallel to this entire *piqquda* (and Wolfson's note); idem, *Shushan Edut*, 360–61; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 35–36. See also *Zohar* 2:91a.

Following Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shevu'ot* 11:1 (and in disagreement with other halakhic authorities, including Naḥmanides), the *Zohar* here classifies swearing in God's name as a positive commandment. See idem, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 7 and Naḥmanides' gloss, ad loc.; *Sefer ha-Ḥinnukh*, commandment 435. For the *Zohar*, swearing in God's name means sustaining the *Shekhinah*, and hence it is

an obligation. See Margaliot's comments in "Ha-Ra'aya Meheimna: Sefer Ha-Mitsvot" in *Zohar* 1, at *piqquda* twelve.

On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1192–94.

80. **Like Boaz...** An oath to overcome temptation is most commendable, the source of divine pride. Boaz was tempted to have intercourse with Ruth, but he overcame his sexual impulse by adjuring it. See *Rut Rabbah* 6:4: "Rabbi Yose said, 'There were three who were attacked by their impulse but girded themselves against it with an oath: Joseph, David, and Boaz.... How do we know this concerning Boaz? Because it is said: *As YHVH lives! Lie down until morning*.'... Rabbi Yehudah said, 'That whole night his impulse incited him, saying, "You are single, looking for a wife; and she is single, looking for a husband. Go have intercourse with her and she will be your wife!" He adjured his impulse, saying, "*As YHVH lives*, I will not touch her!" And to the woman he said, "*Lie down until morning*."'"

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 88; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:11; *Zohar* 1:93b; *ZḤ* 27c (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 221.

81. **Vow is higher...** Whereas an oath pertains to *Shekhinah*, a vow pertains to *Binah*—the source of life, the "Life of the King" from where the divine flow descends below, through the sefirotic limbs of the king, *Tif'eret*. King *Tif'eret* is imagined here as a male body with 248 limbs that draw life from *Binah*, and with 12 joints, signifying 12 paths of influence that connect Him with the other *sefirot*. The sum of these two figures is 260, which matches the numerical value of the verb נודר (*noder*), "to vow." Yet the manuscripts here all read נדר (*neder*), which is the related noun with a numerical value of 254. The limbs themselves are called Life of the King by association, because of the life they receive from *Binah*.

The phrase "Life of the King" derives from *Sifrei*, Numbers 153: "Vows, like one who vows by the life of the

king; oaths, like one who swears by the king himself." See also Naḥmanides on Genesis 2:7; *Zohar* 1:29a; 2:115b (*RM*); 3:58a, 110a (*RM*), 255a (*RM*).

On a vow as hailing from *Binah*, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 538; Naḥmanides on Numbers 30:3; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 222; idem, *Shushan Edut*, 360–61; *Zohar* 2:115b (*RM*). On a vow as being graver than an oath, see *Tosefta Nedarim* 1:5; BT *Nedarim* 13b, 16b; BT *Shevu'ot* 25a. On the twelve joints, cf. *Zohar* 1:241a; 2:201a; *ZḤ* 74b–c (*ShS*). See also *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:2; Vol. 6, p. 319, n. 164. On limbs, see above, note 10.

82. **Oath—to sustain the rung below...** Alluding to *Shekhinah*, the lowest *sefirah*, who is referred to as "name" (see above, note 79). Additionally, the "mystery of the holy name" may refer to the union of *Shekhinah* with *Tif'eret*, for She is often symbolized by the final ה (*he*) in the divine name *YHVH*—whose first three letters can signify *Tif'eret*. *Shekhinah* is called here "the King himself" (derived from *Sifrei*, Numbers 153; see previous note), by virtue of the influence that She receives from King *Tif'eret*—like spirit residing within the body. *Tif'eret* "himself" is more concealed than the revealed *Shekhinah*.

Whereas a vow not to observe a commandment (not merely optional acts) has legal force, an oath to do the same is not valid. This is because the vow hails from *Binah*—and thus is higher than Torah and *mitsvah* (commandment), which signify *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*, respectively.

On vows applying to commandments, see BT *Nedarim* 13b, 16b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Nedarim* 3:1; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 222.

83. **thirteenth commandment...** In the *Haqdamah* of the *Zohar*, this is the sixth commandment, derived from the verse *Let the waters swarm with a swarm of living souls* (Genesis 1:20). See *Zohar* 1:12b–13a. See also Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 17, 224; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*,

140. Just how procreation spreads the holy name and the divine glory is explained below.

See Genesis 1:28: *God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth…."*; Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 212; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Ishut* 15:1.

84. **diminishes the image…** Because human beings are created in the image of God (see Genesis 1:27), any failure to bring new life into the world diminishes the manifestation of that divine image.

According to the *Zohar*, human procreation not only engenders new souls, but also adds to the divinity that flows into the world. The "radiant glory" is both a river of souls and the potent flow of divinity itself—perhaps associated with *Yesod*, the divine phallus. Elsewhere in the *Zohar, Shekhinah* is described as "the image comprising all images," which implies that by not engendering new life, one prevents Her manifestation in particular.

On diminishing the divine image, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 34:14, in the name of El'azar son of Azariah: "Whoever abstains from procreation is as though he diminished the image. Why so? *For in the image of God He made the human being* (Genesis 9:6), after which is written: *As for you, be fruitful and multiply, swarm through the earth and increase on it* (ibid., 7)."

See *Tosefta Yevamot* 8:7; BT *Yevamot* 63b–64a; *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 9:9; *Zohar* 1:13a, 186b; 3:7a; *ZḤ* 59a (*MhN*), 59c (*MhN*), 89b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 140; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 241 (and Wolfson's note); idem, *Shushan Edut*, 353–55; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1360–63. See also Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 388.

Cf. *Bahir* 85 (119): "What is this tree of which you have spoken? He said to him, 'All the powers of the blessed Holy One are arranged in layers, and they are like a tree. Just as

the tree produces its fruit through water, so the blessed Holy One increases the powers of the tree through water. What is the blessed Holy One's water? Wisdom! [The fruit of the tree is] the souls of the righteous who fly from the source to the great canal and it [the fruit] rises up and clings to the tree. By virtue of what does it flower? By virtue of Israel! When they are good and righteous, *Shekhinah* dwells among them, and by their works they dwell in the bosom of the blessed Holy One, and He lets them be fruitful and multiply….'"

For a different interpretation of the verse from Proverbs, see *Zohar* 2:164a–b.

On augmenting God, see Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 157–66.

85. **sheds blood…** *See Bereshit Rabbah* 34:14, in the name of Ben Azzai: "Whoever abstains from procreation is as though he spilled blood and diminished the image." (The same idea is found in *Tosefta, Yevamot* 8:7 and BT *Yevamot* 63b.) In the rabbinic texts, the blood that one sheds is the blood of the unborn. Here, the blood is God's, so to speak! In place of His radiant glory flowing into the world, the failure to procreate causes God's "blood" to spill (not unlike a woman's menstrual flow). Failure to procreate not only prevents the manifestation of *Shekhinah* below, but also it detracts from the divine being above. New souls—generated though human procreation—are the very life-blood of divinity.

On augmenting the divine glory, see *piqquda* twenty-six, *Zohar* 2:40b (*Piq*; below, page 285).

86. **fourteenth commandment…** The *secret* is identified here with *Yesod*—the divine phallus and site of the covenant of circumcision. Those who fear sin (especially sexual sin) and guard the covenant of circumcision prove themselves worthy of attaining the secret rung of *Yesod*.

See *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 19: "*The secret of YHVH is for those in awe of Him; to them He reveals His covenant*.

Which secret did He reveal to *those in awe of Him*? Circumcision, for the blessed Holy One revealed the mystery of circumcision only to Abraham…, to whom was said: *For you fear God* (Genesis 22:12)."

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 23–24; *Bereshit Rabbah* 49:2; *Aggadat Bereshit* 16:2; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 526; *Zohar* 1:91a–b, 95a, 236b; 2:234a; 3:13b–14a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 339; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 17, 226–29; Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48. See also *Zohar* 1:13a, the seventh commandment in the *Haqdamah* of the *Zohar*; Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 215.

87. ***eighth day… eighth of all rungs…*** The foreskin signifies the demonic Other Side and must therefore be removed from the covenant (the phallus). The Jewish phallus symbolizes the divine phallus (*Yesod*), and so removal of the foreskin reflects and effectuates parallel processes on high (see next note). Counting from *Ḥokhmah*, *Yesod* is the eighth *sefirah*. See Cordovero in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc. On *Yesod* as the eighth rung, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 228. See also *Bahir* 105 (157); Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 243. Cf. *Zohar* 1:13a.

On foreskin as representing the demonic realm, see *Zohar* 1:13a, 18a, 35b, 91b, 103b; 2:244b, 266a–b (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (68); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 13a. See *Zohar* 2:41a (*Piq*; below, page 288).

88. **stimulate an action on high…** The removal of the foreskin below generates a parallel ceremony on high, as the foreskin above (signifying the demonic realm) is cast away from Covenant above, namely *Yesod*, thus enabling the divine flow to pour down into *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 2:203b: "But from the Holy Lamp I have heard mystery of mysteries. When foreskin settles on holy Covenant, defiling the sanctuary, then that sanctuary is prevented from revealing the mystery of the sign of the Covenant within the foreskin."

It is customary to perform the rite of circumcision with a prayer quorum, hence "When the Holy People assemble." See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19; Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Yoreh De'ah*, 265. The "Holy People above" appear to be synonymous with the celestial retinue. Just as the removal of the foreskin below is performed in the presence of many, so too on high, the blessed Holy One removes the foreskin above in a celestial ceremony witnessed by His retinue.

On the idea that actions below stimulate actions above—a general and cardinal principle of Kabbalah—see *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 35b, 47b, 125a, 232b, 256b (*Heikh*), 265a (*Heikh*); 3:31b, 40b, 47a, 47b, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144.

See Vital's gloss in *Or ha-Ḥammah, ad loc*.

89. **vessel with dust...** The foreskin is the food of the Other Side—its share. Though pertaining to the realm of impurity, the Other Side must not be treated with disdain.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29: "One covers the foreskin and blood with the dust of the earth." See David Luria, ad loc., n. 52; idem, *Qadmut Sefer ha-Zohar*, 15; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 23:10; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (68); *Zohar* 1:95a; 3:257a (*RM*); *TZ, Haqdamah*, 11a; *Nitsotsei Zohar*, 1:95a, n. 2; *Mahazor Vitri* 505 (625); Ibn Yarḥi, *Sefer ha-Manhig, Hilkhot Milah*, 127; David Abudarham, *Sefer Abudarham, milah*; Joseph Caro, *Beit Yosef, Yoreh De'ah* 265:10; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:896. In a similar application of this motif, Leviticus 17:13 specifies that the blood of an animal that has been hunted and killed must be covered with dirt.

On not treating the Other Side with disdain, see *Zohar* 2:203b. On granting a share to the Other Side, see below, p. 311 and n. 221. The verse from Genesis is part of God's curse of the serpent in the Garden of Eden.

90. **bring his son as an offering...** The ritual of circumcision is understood by the *Zohar* as a sacrificial

offering. See Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (68); *Zohar* 1:93a, 94b–95a; 2:66b; 3:164a. Cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10, 29. Here, the infant is termed a "perfect offering," on which see *Zohar* 1:263a (*Piq*; above, p. 223 and n. 31).

According to some biblical scholars, circumcision originated as a substitute for child sacrifice. See Exodus 22:28–29; Leviticus 12:2–5; 22:27; Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 32–33.

91. **One Sabbath has passed over it…** Just as the animal offering is acceptable only after it has passed through one Sabbath, likewise the circumcision of the human male is performed only once the infant has embraced *Shekhinah*, signified by the Sabbath. Sabbath is described here as "mystery of Holy Covenant," perhaps pointing to the union of male and female that is achieved on Sabbath by means of *Yesod*. Apparently, in order for the animal offering and infant male to accomplish their task of uniting male and female, and of attaining and reflecting the rung of *Yesod*, respectively, they are required to have encountered *Yesod* in its prime, which they do on their first Sabbath.

On circumcision after one Sabbath, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:10: "[*When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born,*] *it shall be seven days under its mother*;] *and from the eighth day on, it shall be acceptable as a fire offering to YHVH*] (Leviticus 22:27). Rabbi Yehoshu'a of Sikhnin said in the name of Rabbi Levi, '[This can be compared to] a king who entered a province and issued a decree, saying, "Let no visitors here attend upon me until they shall have first attended upon the queen!" So, too, the blessed Holy One said to Israel, "My children, you shall not bring an offering to Me until a Sabbath day [the queen of days] shall have passed over it." For there cannot be a period of seven days without a Sabbath, just as there is no circumcision without a Sabbath.'"

See also *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:10; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 3:19; *Devarim Rabbah* 6:1; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 12, 15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 17, 21; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:1; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 20, p. 370; *Zohar* 2:255b (*Heikh*); 3:91a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 228; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 132.

On circumcision as union with *Shekhinah*, see Exodus 4:24–26; BT *Nedarim* 32a; Ibn Ezra on Exodus 4:25. According to Sobol, "Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin," 66–67, circumcision marks the marriage between the infant and *Shekhinah*, which in turn reflects the union of the divine male and female. The removal of the foreskin removes the demonic forces that threaten both unions.

On Sabbath as "mystery of Holy Covenant," see *Zohar* 2:92a. In Exodus 31:16, the Sabbath is called "eternal covenant."

92. **fifteenth commandment...** The twelve months owed the bride derive from the supernal Bride, *Shekhinah*, who is known as Year. See above, note 2, on the number 365 as being associated with *Shekhinah*; and above, page 214, where "days of the year" signifies the divine female. The Bride *Shekhinah* is supported and arrayed by Her twelve maidens, angelic potencies, alluded to by the *twelve oxen* beneath the bronze reservoir built by Solomon in the Temple called *the sea*, and the stones of the *place* encountered by Jacob. Both *sea* and *place* symbolize *Shekhinah*.

The verse from Deuteronomy reads in full: *When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out in the army or be assigned to it for any matter. He shall be exempt* [or: *clear, free*] *in his house for one year and gladden* [or: *delight*] *his wife whom he has taken*.

On the verse from Kings, see *Zohar* 1:241a, 246a, 247a; 2:164b. On *Shekhinah*'s angelic array, see 1:149a–b (*ST*). On Her maidens and adornments, see 1:8a. On *the stones of the place* that Jacob gathered as totaling twelve, see

Bereshit Rabbah 68:11; *Pirqei d-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 35; *Midrash Tehillim* 91:6; *Zohar* 1:147b, 231b; 2:229b. See also 1:49a–b.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 214; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Melakhim* 7:10–11; *Sefer ha-Ḥinnukh*, commandment 582. See also Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 397.

93. **this delight is not his, but hers…** The bride is the focus, not the groom. She is the one who must be delighted. The bride's delight is sexual, just as the celestial Bride, *Shekhinah* (with Her maidens), delights in Righteous One—*Yesod*, the divine phallus, who is also alluded to by נקי (*naqi*). Via the groom's delighting his bride, the Bride on high is also delighted.

See Exodus 23:7: ונקי וצדיק (*Ve-naqi ve-tsaddiq*), *The innocent and righteous, do not kill*.

94. **sixteenth commandment…** This *piqquda* is not found in the printed editions and is extant in only two manuscripts, O21 and PR13. (The printed editions preserve the opening phrase.) See Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 229–30.

On walking in God's ways as imitating His moral attributes or actions, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 49; BT *Sotah* 14a; BT *Shabbat* 133b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot De'ot* 1:5–6; idem, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 8; idem, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:54. See also Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 343.

95. **seventeenth commandment…** The commandment to offer reproof derives from Leviticus 19:17: *You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely reprove* [literally: *reprove, indeed reprove*] *your fellow and not bear guilt because of him*. If one fails to rebuke, he is culpable for his companion's sin.

See *Sifra, Qedoshim* 4:8, 89a; BT *Arakhin* 16b; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 7; Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 205; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot De'ot* 6:7–8; *Sefer ha-Ḥinnukh*, commandment 239;

Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 17, 213–16, 331–32; *Zohar* 3:46a. See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 54:3; BT *Shabbat* 54b.

The full verse from Proverbs reads: *For the one whom YHVH loves He reproves, as a father the son he delights in*. On this verse, see BT *Berakhot* 5a: "Rava (some say, Rav Ḥisda) said, 'If a person sees sufferings coming upon him, he should scrutinize his actions.... If he does so and finds nothing [deserving of punishment], he should attribute it to neglecting the study of Torah.... If he does so and finds no [such neglect], then these are surely chastenings of love, as is said: *For the one whom YHVH loves He reproves, as a father the son he delights in* (Proverbs 3:12).' Rava said, in the name of Rav Saḥora, in the name of Rav Huna, 'Whomever the blessed Holy One delights in, He crushes with chastenings, as is said: *YHVH delights in crushing him by disease* (Isaiah 53:10).'" See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; *Zohar* 3:114b. See also Proverbs 13:24; *Zohar* 2:17b (*MhN*). On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1353–54.

96. **lovingly, secretly... openly...** The pattern of divine rebuke is the model to be imitated. God begins by sending private afflictions—unknown to anyone, lest the sinner be shamed unnecessarily. (On shame, see below, note 99.) Divine reproof becomes ever more public, until after the third time—whereupon God gives up, leaving the sinner to his own devices.

See *Zohar* 3:46a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 215. Cf. *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 10, *Metsora* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 14, *Metsora* 12.

According to BT *Yevamot* 65b (see also JT *Ḥagigah* 1:8, 76d), a person should refrain from offering advice and rebuke if he knows that it will not be heeded; hence God's silence after the third attempt. See also Psalms 81:13: *So I let them go after their willful heart that they might follows their own devices*.

97. **In the era of the High Priest…** In the “aside” in parentheses, “the intimate friends of the blessed Holy One” refer to the priests. During this second rebuke, the matter is known only to the priests and the sinner’s family. In the third stage, the sinner’s rebuke is made public and his suffering apparent to all, so that they come to console him—or perhaps witness his sorrow.

Cf. BT *Berakhot* 5b.

98. **(*Hokheaḥ tokhiaḥ*), *You shall surely reprove…*** The verse from Leviticus encodes the three-part scheme of rebuke. The *Zohar* appears to be reading את עמיתך (*et amitekha*), *your fellow*, as *with your fellow*, and understanding *fellow* as a more distant acquaintance than the “friends and intimates.”

On first offering rebuke in private, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot De’ot* 6:7; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 214–15, 331. See also Rashi on BT *Arakhin* 16b, s.v. *u-fanav mishtanin*. Cf. Matthew 18:15.

On the hermeneutic significance of the double emphatic form (*hokheaḥ tokhiaḥ*), cf. BT *Bava Metsi’a* 31a; BT *Arakhin* 16b.

99. **person who will be ashamed…** Those who readily feel shame require special treatment.

On not causing shame when rebuking, see *Sifra, Qedoshim* 4:8, 89a; BT *Arakhin* 16b; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 7; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot De’ot* 6:8; *Zohar* 3:46a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 215, 331–32. On the importance of not shaming one’s companion in public, see M *Avot* 3:11.

In its simple sense, the final phrase in the verse עליו חטא ולא תשא (*ve-lo tissa alav ḥet*) means *and not bear guilt because of him*, that is, if you fulfill your duty of rebuke you will not be culpable for his sin. In the rabbinic sources, this phrase is understood to mean that one should beware lest one shame one’s fellow in the course of offering rebuke and thus bear guilt because of him. Here, however, it seems that the

Zohar is reading the clause as *and do not raise sin upon him*, that is, don't mention his sin. Once you have rebuked three times you may stop and leave him to his own devices, in which case *you will not bear guilt because of him*—you will not be culpable for him.

100. ***do not raise sin upon him…*** Again, the *Zohar* is reading the final phrase from the verse literally. In addition to causing shame, mentioning the specific sin has the effect of ingraining the sin upon the person, making it harder for him to repent—and perhaps harder for God to forgive.

On God's caring for the honor of even the wicked, cf. BT *Sotah* 32b, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "Why did they institute that prayer be in a whisper? So as not to shame sinners." See also ibid., 44a.

101. **eighteenth commandment…** Blessings uttered prior to eating, drinking, and enjoying fragrance (known in rabbinic parlance as *Birkhot ha-Nehenin*, "Blessings of Enjoyments [or Pleasures]") stimulate divine flow ("oil") to cascade down from the Source of Life (*Binah*, perhaps including *Ḥokhmah*) to the "holy Name" (*Shekhinah*), from where blessings emanate to the entire world. Conversely, failure to bless is tantamount to robbing *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* (*father and mother*). See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 34, 362, for a very close parallel. According to Cordovero in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc., the Source of Life designates *Keter*, and the "holy Name" signifies the four *sefirot* encoded in the name *YHVH*, namely *Ḥokhmah, Binah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*.

See BT *Berakhot* 35b, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa: "Whoever enjoys something of this world without reciting a blessing—it is as if he robs the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is said: *He who robs his father and mother and says, "It is no crime," is partner to a destroyer—father* is none other than the blessed Holy One… and *mother* is none other than Assembly of Israel." In the Talmudic passage, Assembly of Israel apparently refers to a supernal hypostasis (the mother of Israel), as it does

regularly in Kabbalah, designating *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:77a (*ST*); 2:193b, 250a, 262a (last two *Heikh*); 3:44b; *ZḤ* 86c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 104. See also BT *Berakhot* 35a: "Everything that is enjoyed requires a blessing"; and ibid., in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "It is forbidden for a person to taste anything before saying a blessing."

The full verse from Deuteronomy reads: *You shall eat and be satisfied and bless YHVH your God for the good land that He has given you*. Rabbinic tradition cites this verse as the proof-text for the Grace after Meals. See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 16; *Tosefta Berakhot* 6:1; JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2a; 3:3, 6b; BT *Berakhot* 21a, 48b; *Zohar* 1:207b–208a; 2:152b, 153a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 34, 362. Here, as in *Zohar* 3:274a (*RM*), the verse is given a wider interpretation, including the requirement to bless prior to enjoying.

On "Source of Life" as *Binah*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:960, 1003, n. 159; *Zohar* 2:260b–261a (*Heikh*); 3:34a; *ZḤ* 87d (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:135b, 137b, where "source of life" is apparently *Ḥokhmah*.

102. **will himself be blessed...** See *Zohar* 1:199b, 250a. As the verse from Exodus indicates, God comes to and blesses the person who invokes Him in blessing. As the verse from Psalms indicates, the consequence of *azkir*, "invoking," God is *yizkor*—that one is remembered, and blessed by God.

"Fathers and Sons" refers to the *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, and *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*, respectively, who are filled with divine bounty that is then bestowed upon *Shekhinah*, the "Name" of the blessed Holy One.

103. **Orchard of Holy Apples...** In Kabbalah the apple orchard symbolizes *Shekhinah*. She is filled with apple trees, namely the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, whose respective colors all appear in the apple: the white pulp, the red skin, and the green stem.

See BT *Ta'anit* 29b, in the name of Rav: "*Like the fragrance of a field blessed by* YHVH (Genesis 27:27).... Like the fragrance of a field of apple trees." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:22; *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 11; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 35–37; *Zohar* 1:36a, 85a–b, 122a, 128b, 142b, 143b, 224b, 249b; 2:60b, 61b, 84b, 88a; 3:74a, 84a–b, 95a, 133b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 286b–287a, 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 365. See *Zohar* 2:60a (*Piq*; below, page 270).

104. **Afterward, from a certain head of the Righteous One...** As is explained below, the rising blessing triggers divine flow to descend from *Binah* to *Yesod*, the divine phallus (Righteous One), to be bestowed upon *Shekhinah* (the Bride). *Yesod* is filled from the blessing rising from below, as well as the divine flow descending from above—hence *blessings*, in the plural.

On the verse in Proverbs, see *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; *Zohar* 1:55b, 132a, 162a; 2:202b. On *Yesod* as righteous one, see above, note 47.

105. **blessing to which has been responded "Amen" is consummate...** Celestial forces aid the ascent of the blessing recited below. Blessings concluded with "Amen" are especially favorable.

On the significance of "Amen," see BT *Berakhot* 53b; *Zohar* 1:160a; 3:285a–b; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 14:31; cf. BT *Shabbat* 119b.

106. **rungs on high are poised toward the light that does not shine...** The risen blessing stimulates the higher *sefirot* to shine their light upon *Shekhinah*, who has no light of Her own. Congregational prayer is particularly effective.

On the preference for communal prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 7b–8a, *Ta'anit* 8a; *Zohar* 1:160b, 167b, 234a; 2:245b (*Heikh*); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 1:141.

In terms of numerical values, אמן (*Amen*) is 91, which corresponds to the sum of the divine names יהוה (*YHVH*), 26,

and אדני (*Adonai*), 65, signifying *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut* respectively. "Amen" thus unites the divine male and female.

107. **invigorating Her with potent power…** Blessings below invigorate *Shekhinah*, raising Her for union with Her partner.

On the verse from Samuel, see *Zohar* 1:250a; 3:285a.

108. **Mystery of mysteries… shower blessings from above below…** As already stated and as is now outlined in detail, blessings of enjoyment draw down divine bounty from on high. In contrast, the blessings of prayer, in particular the blessings of the *Amidah*, work in two directions —first raising *Malkhut* and the worlds beneath Her, and only then drawing down divine flow from above. Perhaps the *Zohar* here intends its detailed elaboration of the blessings in *Heikhalot Bereshit* (1:41a–45b) and *Heikhalot Pequdei* (2:244b–262b). See especially 2:260b (*Heikh*), also a "mystery of mysteries"; cf. 3:285a.

109. **Non-prayer blessings ascend…** Blessings ascend from below to *Shekhinah* and on to *Binah*, the supernal throne and source of life. From *Binah* (and perhaps *Ḥokhmah* as well) new blessings descend below to *Yesod* ("Righteous One"), which stimulates not only *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* ("Fathers") but also *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* ("Sons") during their descent.

PR13, Cremona, and Mantua conclude: "and all their rungs."

110. **"ברוך (*Barukh*), Blessed"—mystery of the most supernal source of all…** The *Zohar* proceeds to explain precisely how the words of the blessing accomplish the descent of divine flow, each word of the formula pointing to various operations in the sefirotic realm.

The standard opening for blessings is: ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו (*Barukh attah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam asher qiddeshanu be-mitsvotav ve-tsivvanu*), "Blessed are You, *YHVH*, our God, King of the world, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us…."

The opening word *barukh*, "Blessed," is directed at, signifies, and activates *Binah* (though perhaps in concert with *Ḥokhmah*, the upper wisdom). *Binah* and *Ḥokhmah* enjoy perpetual union and generate the ceaseless flow of divine bounty through the *sefirot* and on to *Shekhinah*, who is also known as Blessed, since She too is the source of divine flow for worlds beneath Her.

Cf. *Zohar* 2:135b, 162a; 3:264b, where "Blessed" designates *Ḥokhmah*; and 2:261a (*Heikh*), where it designates *Shekhinah*. On *Shekhinah* sharing the name Blessed with higher domains in the sefirotic realm, see 2:135b.

Binah and *Shekhinah* comprise the two "ends" of heaven, both above and below *Tif'eret*, who is called Heaven. As the uppermost end of heaven, *Binah* constitutes the upper limits of human cognition, only barely fathomable. See Deuteronomy 4:32: *For ask now of primal days, which were before you: from the day that God created humankind on Earth, and from one end of heaven to the other*, etc. In BT *Ḥagigah* 11b, this verse is interpreted as imposing a limit on cosmological speculation: "You may inquire concerning *from one end of heaven to the other*, but you may not inquire concerning what is above, what is below, what came before, what will come after." See M *Ḥagigah* 2:1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:10; *Zohar* 1:1b, 9a; 2:137a, 232a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 20; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 31 (36–37); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 371.

The "slender path" designates the subtle connection between the point of *Ḥokhmah* and the womb of the divine mother, *Binah*. See *Zohar* 1:13b; 3:93a (*Piq*; above, page 242). Elsewhere in the *Zohar* (1:29b; 2:122b–123a; 3:61b), this pathway is known as *a path unknown to any vulture* (Job 28:7).

עלמא דאתי (*Alma de-atei*), "The world that is coming," is the Aramaic equivalent of the rabbinic Hebrew העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*). This term has often been understood as referring to the hereafter and often been translated as "the world to

come." From another point of view, however, "the world that is coming" already exists, occupying another dimension. See *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8: "The wise call it *ha-olam ha-ba* not because it does not exist now, but for us today in this world it is still to come." See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 8:8; and Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, 37: "'The world to come' does not succeed 'this world' in time, but exists from eternity as a reality outside and above time, to which the soul ascends." In the *Zohar*, it often denotes the flow emerging from *Binah*.

111. **You—the supernal right hand…** In the *Zohar*, "You" usually denotes *Shekhinah*, though on occasion, as here, it also signifies *Ḥesed* on the right, which is symbolized also by *priest*. *Ḥesed* is the uppermost *sefirah* that can be addressed directly, since *Binah* (above *Ḥesed*) is concealed—and thus aptly designated by ברוך (*barukh*), "blessed" (a passive participle), rather than the more direct second-person address תתברך (*titbarekh*), "may You be blessed." *Ḥesed* is the "priest" of *Binah*, insofar as it serves *Binah* by channeling the flow that it receives to the central *sefirot*.

On "You" as alluding to *Ḥesed*, see *Zohar* 2:104a; 3:193b, both of which quote the verse in Psalms. Cf. 3:290a (*IZ*). On "You" as alluding to *Shekhinah*, see below, note 119.

The verse in Psalms reads: *You are a priest forever; by My word, My righteous king* [or: *after the manner of Melchizedek*]. In Genesis 14:18, Melchizedek is the king-priest of Salem (Jerusalem), who participates in Abraham's victory over an alliance of eastern kings. According to BT *Nedarim* 32b, the verse applies to Abraham, who in the *Zohar* signifies *Ḥesed*. See also *Zohar* 1:87a; 3:53b.

112. **mystery of the center…** That is, *Tif'eret*, the sefirotic center—the median line poised between right and left.

113. **(*Eloheinu*), Our God—the left side…** *Gevurah*, ameliorated by *Ḥesed*.

According to rabbinic tradition, the name *YHVH* signifies Compassion, whereas *Elohim* signifies Judgment. Kabbalah associates the former with *Tif'eret*, the latter with *Gevurah*. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6; *Zohar* 1:173b; 3:269b; Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 3:24.

On the right as containing the left, see *Zohar* 1:17a, 119b, 243a; 2:26b, 52b, 57a–b, 66a, 81a, 162b, 168b–169a, 223a, 231a, 257a (*Heikh*); 3:17b–18a, 24a, 118b, 176a, 236b; *ZḤ* 44a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; Wolfson, "Left Contained in the Right."

114. **Until here are blessings bound…** Once the triad of *Ḥesed*, *Tif'eret*, and *Gevurah* has received the flow from above, the *sefirot* beneath—namely *Netsaḥ*, *Hod*, and *Yesod*—are also blessed.

115. **they return—merged as one—to that source…** Now primed, having received blessings from above by virtue of the mystical intention of the person reciting the blessing below, the triad of Fathers—namely *Ḥesed*, *Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*—are able to return to their own source above, namely their divine Mother *Binah*, from where they are able to generate yet further blessings.

The verse from Exodus is interpreted as though spoken by *Binah*: the Fathers shall not come to Me until they are blessed with divine flow.

116. ***Melekh*, King…** When the triad returns to *Binah*, who is the womb of being, that divine mother is designated "King." Paralleling *Binah* above, *Shekhinah* is also known as "king," since once infused with the divine bounty from the *sefirot* above, She likewise bestows upon and rules those beneath Her. In the blessing formula, however, the word "king" designates *Binah*, as proven by the specifying phrase that follows: "the World who has sanctified us," where "World" signifies *Binah*, the World that is Coming. Significantly, the second part of the blessing formula is in the third person—which is known in Hebrew grammar as נסתר (*nistar*), "hidden, concealed"—in contrast to the second-person formulation employed in the beginning of the blessing; the greater relational "distance" expressed by the third-person form is apt for *Binah*. Hence, the formula "Blessed are You… who has sanctified us with His commandments" rather than the grammatically consistent "Blessed are You… for You have sanctified us with Your commandments" is perfect, because the switch marks the move back from the more revealed triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* to the hidden world of *Binah*. See *Matoq mi-Devash* for a different interpretation.

On the phrase "the world who has sanctified us and commanded us" as a reference to *Binah*, see Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 26 (30). On the significance of the third-person formulation "who has sanctified us with His commandments…," cf. *Bahir* 125 (184); see also Naḥmanides on Exodus 15:26; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod, Berakhot* 12a, s.v. *kol berakhah she-ein ba malkhut*. On the formula of blessings as requiring both second- and third-person forms, see *Zohar* 3:289a (*IZ*). See also *TZ* 39, 79a–b.

Cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3: "If there be no host for the king and if there be no camp for the king, over whom does he rule? If there be no people to praise the king, where is the honor of the king?"

117. **priest bends down toward that site…** Apparently meaning that during his recitation of the *Amidah*, the priest bows down at the beginning and end of each blessing toward *Ḥesed*, the divine quality with which he is associated, and which is signified by "You" (see above, note 111, and next paragraph).

Filled with the bounty from above as mediated by *Ḥesed* ("Priest"), *Shekhinah* (lower world) is known as "Blessed" (in contrast to the *non-Amidah* blessings, where "Blessed" symbolizes *Binah*; see above, note 110), and it is to Her that one bows upon saying "Blessed" in the first and penultimate prayer in the *Amidah*. On "Blessed" as signifying *Shekhinah* who is raised above in prayer, see *Zohar* 2:261a (*Heikh*). See *Or ha-Ḥammah, Sullam, Matoq mi-Devash* for various interpretations.

See BT *Berakhot* 34a–b: "Our Rabbis taught: These are the blessings during which one bows [in the *Amidah*]: The patriarchs, beginning and end; and the thanksgiving, beginning and end. If one wants to bow down at the end of each blessing and at the beginning of each blessing, he is instructed not to do so. Rabbi Shim'on son of Pazzi said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi reporting Bar Kappara, 'An ordinary person bows as we have mentioned; a high priest at the end of each blessing; a king at the beginning of each blessing and at the end of each blessing.' Rabbi Yitsḥak son of Naḥmani said, 'It was explained to me by Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi that an ordinary person does as we have mentioned; a high priest [bows] at the beginning of each blessing; and a king, once he has knelt down, does not rise again [until the end of the *Amidah*], as is said: *When Solomon finished praying* [*to YHVH all this prayer and supplication*,] *he rose from before the altar of YHVH, from kneeling on his knees*, [*his palms spread out toward heaven*] (1 Kings 8:54).'" See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 39:12.

According to BT *Berakhot* 12a, one bows upon reciting the word "Blessed" and straightens upon mentioning God's

name. See *Zohar* 1:132b. See also Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:10.

118. **At the "Blessed" of prayer…** During the blessings in the *Amidah* in which one is required to bow, one bows or bends his knees upon reciting "Blessed" (directed at *Shekhinah*) and lowers the head upon reciting "You" (directed at *Ḥesed*). The practice of lowering or inclining the head at the mention of "You" is apt, since head is associated with "priest," which in turn is symbolized by "You." In contrast to the layperson who bows during the first and penultimate blessings only, the priest (who signifies *Ḥesed*) must lower his head at every mention of the word "You," which signifies the same divine quality. Representing *Malkhut* ("Kingship, Royalty"), which is the lowest and "fallen" *sefirah* —whose light has been diminished in this world—the king in sympathy with Her lowers his head upon commencing his prayer and he does not rise again.

On these varied practices, see BT *Berakhot* 12a, 34a–b (cited in the previous note). In *Heikhalot Bereshit* and *Heikhalot Pequdei*, the *Zohar* outlines different bowing practices and associated mystical intentions. See p. 33 and n. 69.

The clause "the priest receives at the head" derives from rabbinic sources. According to M *Yoma* 1:2, the high priest "receives a [sacrificial] portion at the head [i.e., first]," before the other priests. See BT *Nedarim* 62a, in the name of Rava: "Just as a priest receives at the head, so a disciple of the wise receives at the head." See *Zohar* 1:47b, 147a; 2:225a; *ZḤ* 43a. Here, the point is that *Ḥesed* (known as "Priest"), being the first *sefirah* beneath *Binah*, is the first to receive Her bounty—which it conveys to those below.

On the diminution of the moon, see BT *Ḥullin* 60b: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Pazzi pointed out a contradiction. 'It is written: *God made the two great lights* (Genesis 1:16), and it is written: *the greater light… and the lesser light* (ibid.). The moon said before the blessed Holy One, "Master of the Universe! Can two kings possibly wear one crown?"

He answered, “Go, diminish yourself!” She said before Him, “Master of the Universe! Because I have suggested something proper I should make myself smaller?” He replied, “Go and rule by day and night.” She said, “But what is the value of this? What good is a lamp at noon?”… Seeing that her mind was uneasy, the blessed Holy One said, “Bring an atonement for Me for making the moon smaller.”’ As was said by Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish: ‘Why is the goat that is offered on the new moon distinguished by the phrase *to* [or: *for*] YHVH (Numbers 28:15)? The blessed Holy One said, “Let this goat be an atonement for My having made the moon smaller.”’”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 6, 51; *Zohar* 1:19b–20a, 31a, 39b (*Heikh*); 181a–b; 2:144b, 147b–148a, 219b; *ZḤ* 14a (*MhN*), 70d–71a (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 189; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 35b.

119. ***For You are our Father…*** See BT *Shabbat* 89b, in the name of Rabbi Yonatan: “What is the meaning of the verse *For You are our Father: though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not recognize us, You, YHVH, are our Father; our Redeemer from of old is Your name*? In the time to come, the blessed Holy One will say to Abraham, ‘Your children have sinned against Me.’ He shall answer Him, ‘Master of the World! Let them be wiped out for the sanctification of Your Name.’ Then shall He say, ‘I will say this to Jacob, who experienced the pain of bringing up children—perhaps he will implore mercy for them.’ He will say to him, ‘Your children have sinned.’ He shall answer Him, ‘Master of the World! Let them be wiped out for the sanctification of Your Name.’… Then shall He say to Isaac, ‘Your children have sinned against Me.’ He shall answer Him, ‘Master of the World! Are they my children and not Your children?! When they gave precedence to *we will do* over *we will hear* before You [see Exodus 24:7; BT *Shabbat* 88a], You called them *My son, My firstborn* (Exodus 4:22); now they are my sons, not Your sons! Moreover, how much

have they sinned? How many are the years of man? Seventy. Subtract twenty, for which You do not punish, and there remain fifty. Subtract twenty-five which comprise the nights, and there remain twenty-five. Subtract twelve and a half of prayer, eating, and nature's calls, and there remain twelve and a half. If You will bear all, fine and well; if not, half be upon me and half upon You. And should You say, they must all be upon me, look, I offered myself up before You [as a sacrifice]!' [Thereupon] they [Israel] shall open and say, '*For you* [i.e., Isaac] *are our father*.' Then shall Isaac say to them, 'Instead of praising me, praise the blessed Holy One' and Isaac shall show them the blessed Holy One with their own eyes. Immediately they will lift up their eyes on high and exclaim, '*You, YHVH, are our father; our redeemer from old is Your name*.'"

From the *Zohar*'s perspective, the account in the Talmud is somewhat surprising, as the one who comes to Israel's defense would have been expected to be either Abraham, signifying *Ḥesed* (Love), or Jacob, signifying *Tif'eret* (Compassion)—rather than Isaac, who signifies *Gevurah* (Judgment). Additionally, we have just learned that *you* designates *Ḥesed*, and yet here Israel call Isaac, signifying *Gevurah*, by this name. This anomaly can be explained in light of the core Zoharic principle of the left as being comprised in the right—the attribute of judgment subsumed in the attribute of love—on which see above, note 113.

Normally in the *Zohar*, "father" designates *Ḥokhmah*. Here, however—based on the verse in Judges—it is equated with *priest*, which denotes *Ḥesed* (see above, note 111) and is also alluded to by *you*. Hence: *You are our father*. And just as *Ḥesed* can be designated *father* by virtue of its connection to *Ḥokhmah*, so *Shekhinah* (the light that does not shine) can also be called *You*, by virtue of Her association with *Ḥesed*. *Redeemer* and *name* allude to *Shekhinah*, and so the referent of *You* in the verse in Isaiah is also *Shekhinah*.

On *Shekhinah* as "You," see *Zohar* 1:15b, 37a, 154b, 158b, 169a, 198a, 205b; 2:23b, 70a (*RR*), 104a, 138b, 140a, 179b, 221a, 261a (*Heikh*); 3:199a. On the verse from Isaiah, see 1:205a–b; 2:90a; 3:290a (*IZ*).

120. **nineteenth commandment…** Both the Temple and the synagogue (the "mini-Temple" or "mini-sanctuary," as it is called in BT *Megillah* 29a) correspond to the celestial pattern: they reflect *Shekhinah*. Following the destruction of the second Temple in 70 C.E., the synagogue became the site of religious service—prayer, the "service of the heart."

As in the rabbinic interpretation of the verse from Exodus, there is a play on words: מכון (*makhon*), "dais," and מכוון (*mekhuvan*), "corresponding to; aligned with; directly opposite." The verse from Exodus thus implies that God fashioned an earthly throne that aligns perfectly with the throne on high: *mekhuvan, that which is aligned with, Your throne, You made, O YHVH*. See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 10; JT *Berakhot* 4:5, 8c; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:9; *Tanḥuma, Vayaqhel* 7, *Pequdei* 1–3. See *Zohar* 1:183b; 3:161b, 221a; *ZḤ* 28c (*MhN*). The phrase from the verse from Exodus can also be rendered: *The place You have made for Your dwelling, O YHVH*.

On prayer as service, see *Zohar* 3:111b (*Piq*; above, p. 216 and n. 14). Cf. Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 20. On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1017–18.

I have followed O21. PR13 and the print editions read: "for it is obligatory to build a sanctuary below."

On the correspondence between above and below, see below, note 205.

121. **synagogue below corresponds to the synagogue above** The synagogue—Aramaic בי כנשתא (*bei kenishta*) and Hebrew בית כנסת (*beit keneset*), "house of assembly"—corresponds to *Shekhinah*, the synagogue above, also known as כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra'el*), "Assembly of Israel."

Shekhinah assembles within Her the *sefirot* above, as well as the souls and prayers of Israel below.

See *Zohar* 2:251a (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 48.

122. **Temple below corresponds to the Temple above…** Just as the actual Temple (and synagogue) corresponds with the Temple above, namely *Shekhinah*, here the *Zohar* apparently intends that the Temple below, namely *Shekhinah* (*Malkhut*), corresponds with the Temple above, signifying *Binah*—indicating the divine daughter and mother, respectively.

123. **Dwelling fashioned by Moses…** The portable Tabernacle as described in Exodus 25–27.

See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:12, in the name of Rabbi Simon: "When the blessed Holy One told Israel to erect the Dwelling [or: Tabernacle], He hinted to the angels that they too should construct a Dwelling. When it was erected below, it was erected above; and that is the Dwelling of the Youth named Metatron, in which he offers up the souls of the righteous to atone for Israel in the days of their exile." See *Tanḥuma, Naso* 18; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5, 22b; *Zohar* 1:35a; 2:143a, 159a (standard editions), 235b, 239b–242b; 3:3b; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 40:17. On the various earthly and celestial Dwellings and Temples, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:869–78. On the difference between the Dwelling erected by Moses and Solomon's Temple, see *Zohar* 2:241a, 242a.

"To achieve celestial configuration" means to reflect the celestial pattern, and perhaps also to unify the divine couple, *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*.

"House of tranquility and estate" (alternatively, "House of rest…" or "House of repose…") derives from Deuteronomy 12:9: *For you have not come as yet to the resting-place and estate that YHVH your God is about to give you*. See *Onqelos*, ad loc. According to numerous rabbinic sources and commentaries, the phrase המנוחה ואל הנחלה (*ha-*

menuḥah ve-el ha-naḥalah), *resting-place and estate*, signifies the Dwelling and Temple, respectively. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 66; BT *Zevaḥim* 119a; *Midrash Tehillim* 5:1; Rashi, Baḥya ben Asher, ad loc.

124. **synagogue must have windows…** Just as *Shekhinah*, the synagogue above, is adorned by Her angelic potencies, so too the synagogue below. Appropriately adorned, the synagogue can then become a site "for configuring arrangements through prayer," meaning to effectuate the union of the divine male and female. In the *Heikhalot* stratum of the *Zohar*, the potencies of *Shekhinah* that are located in the third hall are known as "windows" (also based on the verse from Song of Songs; see *Zohar* 2:250a–251a); and corresponding to them, the synagogue below must also have windows.

See BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "A person should pray only in a house with windows, as is said: *There were windows open in the upper chamber toward Jerusalem* [*and three times a day he knelt on his knees and prayed and offered praise before his God*] (Daniel 6:11)." See Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *ḥallonot*; *Zohar* 2:251a (*Heikh*); 3:114b; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 16b.

125. **Even in a field… Not so…** Given the need for windows in a synagogue, one might think that prayer out in the open would be best—to more easily enable the ascent of spirit. This option is rejected outright by the *Zohar*. To match the celestial configuration and enable the indwelling of *Shekhinah*, there must be a house below (the synagogue) to match the house above (*Shekhinah*); and so prayer should be performed in the synagogue.

As noted by Sobol ("Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin," 74–75), the *Zohar* here appears to be polemicizing against what may have been practiced in some circles in the *Zohar*'s day. See the passage of Ashkenazi provenance (Ms. JTS 2026, 8b–9a) cited by Idel in "Ha-Tefillah be-Qabbalat Provons," 270, which suggests a numerical equivalence (314) between שדי

(*Shaddai*)—signifying Metatron, described as the angel who receives prayers—and השדה (*ha-sadeh*), "the field," thereby deducing that prayer to Metatron is best offered in a field. The passage also cites Genesis 24:63, cited below. See also Dan, *Iyyunim be-Sifrut Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*, 82–84.

On the importance and significance of prayer in the synagogue—as the abode of *Shekhinah*—see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 48. See also BT *Berakhot* 6a.

126. ***From the straits…*** Or: *From confinement* (the noun usually meaning "distress"). The verse concludes: *Yah answered me with expanse*. Just as the shofar's sound is able to penetrate the atmosphere and ascend on high because it emerges under pressure through a narrow opening, so prayer requires a confined space to concentrate the words and spirit, that they too might ascend and not fall victim to demonic forces lying in wait.

On the verse from Psalms, cf. *Zohar* 3:139b (*IR*), 295a (*IZ*). On prayer ascending to Jerusalem (here signifying Jerusalem above, namely *Shekhinah*, the spirit on high), see the verse from Daniel quoted above in note 124 and BT *Berakhot* 31a, 34b.

127. ***Isaac went out to meditate in the field…*** How can one say that prayer in a field is not permitted, when according to Genesis, Isaac prayed in a field?! But that verse from Genesis is no proof, for two reasons. First, Isaac signifies *Gevurah* ("Fear of Isaac") and hence he did not need to fear that his prayer out in the open would be assailed by demonic forces. Secondly, the field in the verse does not mean an ordinary field, but rather the sefirotic field, *Shekhinah*, in which the *sefirot* above are sown.

The verse in Genesis reads: *Isaac went out* לשוח (*la-suaḥ*), *to meditate* [or: *stroll*], *in the field as evening turned*. Traditionally, the verse is cited to prove that Isaac instituted the statutory afternoon prayer. See BT *Berakhot* 26b: "Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Ḥanina said, 'The patriarchs instituted the prayers.'… Abraham instituted the morning

prayer…, Isaac instituted the afternoon prayer, as is said: *Isaac went out to meditate in the field as evening turned*…. Jacob instituted the evening prayer."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16; *Zohar* 1:21a, 157b (*ST*); 2:39b (connecting *the field* from the verse in Genesis with *Shekhinah*—who hovered over *the field that Abraham bought* [as a burial plot; Genesis 25:10]; apparently this is the passage intended by the *Piqqudin*); 3:242a.

On *Shekhinah* as "field," also known as the Holy Apple Orchard, see Genesis 27:27: *like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH*; BT *Ta'anit* 29b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:22; *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 11; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 35–37; *Zohar* 1:36a, 85a–b, 122a, 128b, 142b, 143b, 224b, 249b; 2:60b, 61b, 84b, 88a; 3:74a, 84a–b, 95a, 133b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 271a (*Piq*), 286b–287a, 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 365.

See also the statement by Rav Kahana in BT *Berakhot* 34b: "I consider one who prays in a valley impudent" and the gloss by *Tosafot*, s.v. *ḥatsif alai*, "Now, you might say, 'It is written: *Isaac went out to meditate in the field*!'…" The explanation offered by *Tosafot* differs from the *Zohar*, yet the former appears to be the "blueprint" for the latter, at least in form.

128. **twentieth commandment…** This *piqquda* is not found in the printed editions and is extant in only two manuscripts, O21 and PR13. See *Derekh Emet* at *Zohar* 2:60a; Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 230.

"The awe of the blessed Holy One" designates *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 3:263b (*Piq*; above, page 226), citing the same verse from Leviticus. On this verse, see also 1:5b–6a; 3:81b–82a.

See also Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 21; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Beit ha-Beḥirah* 7.

129. **twenty-first commandment…** In the *Zohar* the verse from Psalms alludes to the flow of emanation from the divine head to the *sefirot* below, which are known as מדות (*middot*), "attributes." See *Zohar* 2:87b; 3:7b, 34a, 39a, 88b–89a, 132b (*IR*), 209a, 295b (*IZ*); Baḥya ben Asher on Numbers 21:19.

"Priest" symbolizes *Ḥesed*. The flow of emanation streams from *Binah* and beyond, first (at the *head*) down to *Ḥesed* and then on through the other *sefirot*. Because that flow first reaches *Ḥesed* (symbolized by "priest"), it is the priest who must light the lamps in the Temple—and thus stimulate the divine flow.

The seven lamps of the lampstand signify the seven lower *sefirot*: the six male *sefirot* of *Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*. See *Zohar* 3:149b–150a (also on the kindling of the lamps).

Leviticus 21:12, referring to the high priest, reads in full: *From the sanctuary he shall not go out, and he shall not profane the sanctuary of his God, for* נזר (*nezer*), *the distinction of, his God's anointing oil is upon him. I am YHVH*. Here, it is quoted without the word *nezer*. See *Zohar* 3:88b. As with the verse from Psalms, this verse describes the flow of emanation (oil) upon *him*—the priest, signifying *Ḥesed*.

See Exodus 30:7–8: *Aaron shall burn upon it* [that is, upon the incense altar] *aromatic incense morning after morning;* בהיטיבו (*be-heitivo*), *when he tends, the lamps he shall burn it.* ובהעלת אהרן (*Uv-ha'alot Aharon*), *And when Aaron lights up, the lamps at twilight he shall burn it, a perpetual incense before YHVH throughout your generations*.

The simple meaning of *be-heitivo*—literally *when he improves*—is *when he tends*, that is, when Aaron cleans out the lamps' refuse and replaces the wicks and oil each morning after they had burned out. However, according to Maimonides, *be-heitivo* is equivalent to *be-ha'alot, when he lights up*—implying that each morning, Aaron relit any lamps that had gone out. Hence the lamps were lit twice each day, morning and twilight.

See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Temidin u-Musafin* 3:12 (and *Leḥem Mishneh* and *Kesef Mishneh*, ad loc.); *Zohar* 1:229b–230a; 3:11a, 33b, 150a, 183a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 86; Solomon ben Abraham Adret, *Teshuvot ha-Rashba* 1:309 (disputing with Maimonides); Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, 23:161–62.

Targum Onqelos and *Targum Yerushalmi* both render בהיטיבו (*be-heitivo*) as באתקנותיה (*be-atqanuteih*), *when he improves* [or: *prepares*], conveying the literal sense of the word. However, various early kabbalistic sources quote another Targumic rendering: באדלקותיה (*be-adlaquteih*), *when he kindles*, matching Maimonides' interpretation. See Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 485; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 89; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 166, 194; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 196 (and Wolfson's note); Recanati on Genesis 1:4, 4c; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 292; Vol. 1, p. 125, n. 132.

On the twice daily unification, see *Zohar* 3:263b (*Piq*; above, page 245).

130. ***Oil and incense rejoice the heart*** On this verse in Proverbs, see *Tanḥuma, Tetsavveh* 15; *Zohar* 1:230a; 3:8a, 11a, 30b, 34a, 58b, 104b–105a, 149a, 150a, 151b, 177b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 86–87.

131. **twenty-second commandment…** On the priestly blessing, see Numbers 6:22–27: *YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'Thus shall you bless the Children of Israel. Say to them: May YHVH bless you and protect you. May YHVH shine His face upon you and be gracious to you. May YHVH lift up His face to you and give you peace.' They shall set My name upon the Children of Israel, and I Myself will bless them."*

The blessing is recited with raised hands. See M *Sotah* 7:6; BT *Sotah* 38a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah u-Nsi'at Kappayim* 14:1, 3. The priestly blessing was recited twice daily in the Temple in Jerusalem. Following

the Temple's destruction and the cessation of the sacrificial cult, it became the main remnant of priestly ritual—and was also inserted before the last blessing of the *Amidah* on certain occasions, according to local custom.

For a close parallel to this passage, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254–55.

On the fingers and their correspondence to the *sefirot*, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:3; *Midrash Tadshe* 10 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:174); *Bahir* 87 (124), 94 (138); Naḥmanides on Exodus 17:12; 30:19; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; idem, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 1:20b–21a; 2:57a, 67a, 75b–77a, 208a; 3:143a (*IR*), 186a–b, 195b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 56–57; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 107.

On raising the right hand higher than the left—here signifying the prevalence of *Ḥesed* over *Din*—see Meir ha-Kohen of Rothenberg, *Haggahot Maimoniyyot, hilkhot tefillah* 14:3; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 2:32a, 66a, 67a, 225a; 3:92b, 146a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 29.

"Benevolently" renders בעינא טבא (*be-eina tava*), "with a good eye; benevolently; generously."

The notion of blessing generously recalls a midrashic interpretation of a verse in Proverbs 22:9: טוב עין הוא יְבֹרָך (*Tov ayin hu yevorakh*), *He that has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor*. See BT *Sotah* 38b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "We give the cup of blessing for the recital of Grace after Meals only to one who has a generous eye, as is said: *He that has a generous eye* יְבוֹרָך (*yevorakh*), *will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor*. Do not read *yevorakh, will be blessed*, but rather יְבָרֵך (*yevarekh*), *will bless*."

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 26.

132. ***Shekhinah*** **resting upon those fingers…** See Rashi, BT *Ḥagigah* 16a, s.v. *u-mevarkhin et ha-am be-shem ha-*

meforash, on the prohibition of looking at the priests during the benediction; he explains: "For *Shekhinah* rests on the joints of their fingers."

See also *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:2: "The blessed Holy One said to them [to Israel], 'Even though I said to the priests that they should bless you, I stand with them and bless you.' Therefore the priests spread their hands, to indicate that the blessed Holy One stands behind us; hence it says *gazing through the windows* (Song of Songs 2:9)—between the priests' shoulders, and *peering through the crevices* (ibid.)—through the priests' fingers." See also *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8.

On God's concurring with the priests in the blessing, see BT *Ḥullin* 49a.

133. **arouse entities on high...** On the idea that actions below stimulate actions above, a general and cardinal principle of Kabbalah, see above, note 88. See especially Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 181. On the *lulav*, see *Zohar* 3:104a (*Piq*; below, page 315). On the shofar, see 3:98b (*Piq*; below, p. 306 and n. 212).

134. **forbidden for a person to deploy fingers...** As human fingers reflect supernal mysteries (mystery of faith) and rouse *Shekhinah* (holy Name), raising them in vain is forbidden. See *Zohar* 2:67a; 3:195b. The "ten powers" are the ten *sefirot*, or alternatively, a decade of powers within *Shekhinah*.

135. **sixty letters... sixty myriads...** The three verses comprising the blessing (Numbers 6:24–26) contain a total of 60 letters: 15, 20, and 25 respectively. Here, this total is correlated with the traditional number of male Israelites above the age of twenty who left Egypt: 600,000 or sixty myriads. See Exodus 12:37, 38:26; Numbers 1:46; 2:32; 11:21; cf. 26:51. See also *Zohar* 1:2a–b. This ideal number also corresponds to the six central male *sefirot* of *Tif'eret Yisra'el*.

On the sixty letters in the priestly blessing, cf. *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:3, 18:21, *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:7;

Tanḥuma, Naso 9.

136. **holy name that emerges…** The priestly blessing encodes a divine name, though precisely what this name might be is not clear. In their recitation of the blessing, the priests set this name upon the Children of Israel. The name ascends to the throne above, signifying *Binah*; both upper and lower *Shekhinah*—signifying *Binah* and *Malkhut* respectively—participate in the blessing.

On the divine name encoded in the priestly blessing, see *Bahir* 80 (111), mentioning a twelve-letter name associated with the three occurrences of *YHVH* in the blessing. Cf. *Zohar* 2:156b, mentioning a name of twenty-two letters, traditionally associated with the blessing. On that incomprehensible name אנקתם פסתם פספסים דיונסים (*Anaqtam Pastam Paspasim Deyonsim*), which was apparently derived from various permutations of the opening twenty-two letters of the blessing, see *Sefer Raziel* 42b, 44b–45a; Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim* 21:14; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 92–94.

The verse from Numbers concludes: *and I Myself will bless them*. On the verse, see also *Zohar* 3:38a.

On two *Shekhinah*s, see *Zohar* 3:98a (*Piq*; below, p. 300 and n. 195).

137. **twenty-third commandment…** See BT *Qiddushin* 30b: "There are three partners in a human being: the blessed Holy One, his father, and his mother." In the Talmudic passage this statement is cited as justification for the parallel requirements of honoring God and honoring one's parents.

See JT *Qiddushin* 1:7, 61b; JT *Kil'ayim* 8:3, 31c; BT *Niddah* 31a; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23; *Zohar* 2:93a; 3:219b; *ZḤ* 16b (*MhN*), 49a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 17, 217.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 210; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Mamrim* 6:1.

138. **Father… Mother… supernal King…** The *Zohar* now describes the creation of the first human being, likewise created by three partners. “Father” and “Mother” would seem to denote *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* respectively, with the “supernal King” indicating *Tif’eret*. The “dust of the Temple on high” apparently signifies the sefirotic realm in general (rather than *Shekhinah* specifically). According to the *Zohar*, not only Adam’s soul but also his body hails from the celestial realm. Cf. *Matoq mi-Devash* for a different (Lurianic) interpretation of this passage. According to the *Sullam*, “Father” and “Mother” signify *Tif’eret* and *Malkhut*, and the “supernal King” signifies *Binah*.

Alternatively, the “human being” described in this passage is not the first flesh-and-blood human being, but rather the image of the human being in the *sefirot*, Primordial Adam. According to this reading, “Father” and “Mother,” *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, generate the six central male *sefirot* (centered around *Tif’eret*). In this case, “supernal King” may indicate *Keter*, the highest *sefirah*. See Sobol, “Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin,” 26; Cohen-Alloro, “Me-Hokhmata Ila’ah,” 43, n. 45. See also *Zohar* 2:167b.

See Genesis 2:7: *YHVH Elohim formed the human, dust from the earth, and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the human became a living being*.

On the *dust from the earth* as signifying the Temple, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 12: “He created him from a pure, holy site. From where did He take him? From the site of the Temple.”

See JT *Nazir* 7:2, 56b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:8; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 2:7; *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 2, p. 173; *Zohar* 1:34b, 130b, 205b; 2:23b, 24b; 3:46b, 200b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 344.

On *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* as Father and Mother, see for example, *Zohar* 2:85a; 3:290a (*IR*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:299–300. On Primordial Adam, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:295–98; Liebes, *Peraqim*,37–39.

139. **Righteous One performed conjugally with His Female…** Here the "human being," apparently designating the mythical first human being, is created by *Yesod* (Righteous One) and *Malkhut*, the divine phallus and divine female respectively. As in the preceding account, the entirety of the first human, body and soul, hails from above. The twenty-two letters of the alphabet infused by the "supernal King," here apparently signifying *Tif'eret* (or perhaps *Binah*), are the body's animating force, like the breath of life in the biblical account.

In the manuscripts, this paragraph begins with the letters בס״ת, presumably meaning בסתרי תורה (*be-sitrei Torah*), "In the Secrets of Torah." However, this passage is not found in the Zoharic stratum bearing that name. Cf. *Zohar* 3:245b, 277a (both *RM*).

On the letters, see *Zohar* 2:73b; 167b; *ZḤ* 74a (*ShS*); cf. *Sefer Yetsirah* 2. See Wolfson, "Dimmui Antropomorfi," 164–65, 178. The letters appear again in the *Piqqudin* in the context of Shabbat, where they are the animating principle of all being. See *Zohar* 2:92a–b (*Piq*; below, page 279).

On Adam's splendor, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:2; 12:6; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:2; BT *Bava Batra* 58a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:4; 12:1; 26:3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14, 62a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 8:2; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 6; *Aḥarei Mot* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 18, 25; *Aḥarei Mot* 3; *Ḥuqqat* 17; *Midrash Mishlei* 31:30; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:12. See also *Zohar* 1:121b (*MhN*); 3:83b, 117a.

140. **apple of his feet darkened their light…** Deriving from the supernal Sun and Moon—namely *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*, the male and female aspects of divinity—Adam "darkened" the light of the real sun and moon; such was his luster by comparison. Following his sin, his stature and luminosity were diminished and he acquired an earthly human body, having previously enjoyed a body of light.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:2, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Menasya: "The apple [round fleshy part] of Adam's

heel outshone the globe of the sun. How much more so the brightness of his face!" See also BT *Bava Batra* 58a; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:4; 12:1; *Zohar* 1:142b.

On Adam's becoming smaller, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12a, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Adam extended from earth to heaven.... As soon as he sinned, the blessed Holy One placed his hands upon him and diminished him." See also BT *Sanhedrin* 38b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:6; *Zohar* 1:53b, 142b. See Altman, "The Gnostic Background of the Rabbinic Adam Legends"; Urbach, *The Sages*, 227–32.

The verse in Genesis reads כתנות עור (*kotnot or*), *coats* [or: *garments*] *of skin*, namely coats of animal skin, but a variant reading recorded in midrashic literature is: כתנות אור (*kotnot or*), *coats of light*, suggesting the original aura. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:12: "In the Torah [scroll] of Rabbi Me'ir, it was found written: 'כתנות אור (*kotnot or*), *coats of light*.' These are the clothes of Adam."

As a result of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, Adam and Eve lost their luster and were clothed in skin. See *Zohar* 1:36b, 224a; 2:208b, 229b; 3:261b; *ZḤ* 78c (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. Origen, *Contra Celsum* 4:40; *Apocryphon of John* 23:31–32; *Hypostasis of the Archons* 90:16; Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 1:5:5. See also Cohen-Alloro, "Me-Ḥokhmata Ila'ah," 43–50.

141. **Enoch... clarified dross and slag...** This paragraph is quite obscure, though the general sense seems to be that following Adam's sin, the union of *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut* was blemished. This situation continued until the advent of Enoch, whose mysterious activity (clarifying "dross") remedied the union of the divine male and female, such that spirits and souls were once again fashioned from their union—though now bodies derive from below (via human parents), rather than the celestial realm. (Only Adam's body was created on high.) The righteous

throughout the generations are partners with Enoch in this work of clarification.

Enoch's work of purification is not explained here, though in *ZḤ* 42d, the *Zohar* describes Enoch as gathering the original radiance of Adam, which following his sin lay scattered among the trees of the garden of Eden. Through Enoch's learning Torah with the help of the angels and a celestial book, Adam's erstwhile light enters him, until he and it return to their source above. Whereas Adam had begun as a body of light and assumed a body of flesh, Enoch begins with a body of flesh and assumes a body of light in his transfiguration into Metatron. See Sobol, "Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin," 29–31; cf. *Matoq mi-Devash, Sullam*.

On God's taking Enoch, see Genesis 5:24: *Enoch walked with God and he was no more, for God took him*. On Enoch's connection with Adam, see Idel, *Olam ha-Mal'akhim*, 95–100.

See Proverbs 25:4: *Remove the dross from the silver, and a vessel emerges for the refiner*.

"Slag" renders קסטורא (*qastora*), apparently deriving from the more common term קסטירא (*qastira*), which is based on Greek *kassiteros*, "tin." In *Zohar* 2:31b, אקוסטרא (*aqustera*) apparently means toxic "slag." On *qastira*, see *Targum Yerushalmi* and *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Numbers 31:22; *Zohar* 1:125a, 151a; 2:24b, 208b; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 186, 188; *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *qstr*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qastera*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 349. Cf. Vol. 5, p. 501, n. 881.

142. **twenty-fourth commandment...** See *Zohar* 1:14a; 2:92a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 15, 118. On the Sabbath in the *Zohar*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1223–1238.

On Sabbath as equivalent to the whole Torah, see JT *Berakhot* 1:4, 3c; JT *Nedarim* 3:9, 38b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 20; *Devarim Rabbah* 4:4; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 92; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33; *Shemot Rabbah* 25:12; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shabbat* 30:15;

Zohar 2:47a, 89a, 90b, 92a, 151a; *ZḤ* 17b (*MhN*), 45a; *TZ* 21, 57a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 335; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110. On Sabbath as the day of rest following the creation of the world, see Genesis 2:1–3.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment, no. 155; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shabbat* 29:1.

143. **sanctifying it with all manner of sanctifications…** The commandment to remember the Sabbath is fulfilled both through the קידוש (*qiddush*), "sanctification," of Sabbath eve and Sabbath day, and through *havdalah*, the ceremony of separation at its conclusion. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shabbat* 29:1.

144. ***Remember*—for… male;… *Observe*—for female…** The references to "remember" and "observe" allude to two versions of the Ten Commandments. The first version reads: זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Exodus 20:8). The second version reads: שמור (*Shamor*), *Observe, the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Deuteronomy 5:12). According to rabbinic tradition, these two verses were spoken by God simultaneously. For the kabbalist, *zakhor* suggests זכר (*zakhar*), "male," signifying the male divine potency, whereas *shamor* signifies the female, *Shekhinah*. See the opening of the *Piqqudin*, *Zohar* 3:92b (*Piq*; above, p. 210 and n. 2). Sabbath spans not only the male and female divine potencies and their union, but also the entire sefirotic spectrum—from the "supernal head" (which usually designates *Keter*, though here perhaps *Binah* is intended) through to *Shekhinah*.

On the various sefirotic aspects of Sabbath, see *Zohar* 1:5b, 47b; 2:47a, 92a–b, 138a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1223–26, especially p. 1224. On Sabbath as comprising "all faith," i.e., the full sefirotic spectrum, see *Zohar* 2:207b; 3:288b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 118.

145. **three rungs…** Sabbath eve is under the aegis of *Shekhinah*, while Sabbath day is under the aegis of *Tif'eret*. Both are under *Binah*, "supernal Sabbath," elsewhere referred to as Great Sabbath—signifying the world to come, the day that is entirely Sabbath. Throughout the Sabbath, the three rungs function as a unity; as each rung rules, the other two appear with it. See *Zohar* 1:47b; 2:204a; *TZ* 19, 40b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 111.

146. **When night comes…** On Friday night, when Sabbath enters, *Shekhinah* invites *Tif'eret* into its palace, and together they receive the flow of *Binah*. Because the three rungs are present on Sabbath eve, and not just on Sabbath day, the evening feast is crucial. Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 105a: "The honor of [Sabbath] day and the honor of [Sabbath] night—the honor of the day takes precedence"; ibid. 105b. See [Moses de León?], *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, 31. See also Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shabbat* 29:4; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 60–61; *Nitsotsei Zohar*, 2:88a, n. 4; 2:92a, n. 7; Scholem's note, ad loc.; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1235.

147. **When day comes…** On Sabbath day, when *Tif'eret* prevails, He invites *Binah* and *Shekhinah*. The former bestows divine flow upon *Tif'eret*; the latter receives flow from Him. The three rungs are a totality, corresponding to the three divisions of scripture: Written Torah, signifying *Binah*; Prophets, signifying *Tif'eret*; and Writings, signifying *Shekhinah*.

On observing the Sabbath as being equivalent to observing the whole Torah, see above, note 142.

148. **Two pearls, one peg…** The "upper pearl" signifies *Binah* (who remains hidden); the lower pearl, *Shekhinah* (*Malkhut*). The peg designates the six central male *sefirot* that are grouped around *Tif'eret*, linking the two divine females. The "peg" is the letter ו (*vav*) of the divine name יהוה (*YHVH*)—linking the first ה (*he*), which symbolizes *Binah*, with the final ה (*he*), symbolizing *Malkhut*. The peg-shaped and phallic *vav* has the numerical value of six.

סיכתא (*Sikketa*) means “peg, nail.” See BT *Eruvin* 53a; *Zohar* 1:232a (*Tos*); Moses de León, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 26.

149. **seven letters are two names…** Seven letters comprising two divine names are engraved in this “upper pearl,” *Binah*. According to Cordovero in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, these letters are the roots of the *sefirot*. On the Sabbath, these letters emerge progressively, attain their full vitality, and reconfigure the sefirotic realm. This reconfiguration (or reinvigoration) is akin to the original state of the first Sabbath, immediately after creation.

In the *Zohar*, the name אהיה (*'HYH* or *Ehyeh*) usually denotes *Keter*, though sometimes it can also refer to *Binah*. The name יהו (*YHV* or *Yaho*) can refer to *Ḥokhmah, Binah*, and the six *sefirot* grouped around *Tif'eret*; or alternatively to *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. Significantly, each of these two names has a numerical value of 21, totaling 42 (see below, note 160).

On the name *YHV*, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:13; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 31–33.

“Castles” renders קסטירין (*qastirin*), derived from Latin *castrum* (pl. *castra*), “castle; fortress; military camp.” Here it apparently refers to *Binah*, who is often described as a palace. See *Zohar* 3:65b. Cf. Cordovero and Galante in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc., who render היכלות (*heikhalot*), “halls, palaces.”

For various interpretations of this passage, see *Or ha-Ḥammah; Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the letters and their combinations, see Sobol, “Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin,” 48–56. See above at note 139, where letters animate the first human being.

On protruding and sparkling letters, see *Zohar* 2:209b, 212a, 218b; 3:164b, 170b, 173a; *ZḤ* 67d (*ShS*); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 271 (132), 282 (135), 289 (137).

150. **illuminated by one another in two modes…** The white “mode” (or “hue, aspect”) denotes the quality of *Ḥesed*—the right side; and the red mode, the quality of *Din*—

the left side. (Here, *Ḥesed* and *Din* do not signify the *sefirot* per se, but rather their respective qualities.) The process of combination and the names generated through the combination are explained in the following paragraphs.

151. **א (*Alef*) emerges forth…** The first and rightmost letter of the name אהיה combines with the last and leftmost letter of the name יהו in two modes, namely forward and backward—generating או (*alef, vav*) and וא (*vav, alef*). These two combinations yield two divine names: יהוה (*YHVH*), signifying *Ḥesed*; and אל (*El*), signifying *Netsaḥ*. The first series of combinations thereby configures the right line of the sefirotic structure. This is followed by the first ה of אהיה, the second to rightmost letter, combining with the middle letter of יהו, once again in two modes—generating הה (*he, he*) and הה (*he, he*). These two combinations yield two divine names: יֱהוִה (*YHVH*) with the vowel points of אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*), signifying *Din*, and אלהים (*Elohim*), signifying *Hod*. The second series of combinations thereby configures the left line of the sefirotic structure. The names generated through the combinations are not entirely commensurate with the *sefirot*; they appear to indicate either their potentiality within *Binah* or a stage in their emergence. Only later will they reach their final position and status.

The hybrid form יֱהוִה appears only in the phrase אדני יהוה (*Adonai Elohim*), *my Lord God*—which occurs four times in the Torah, three times in Psalms, and often in the Prophets. See *Zohar* 3:10b, 65a.

See Cordovero's and Galante's glosses in Or *ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc.; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; cf. *Matoq mi-Devash*.

152. **י (*Yod*) combines with י (*yod*)…** The third letter from the right in אהיה and the third letter from the left in יהו combine in two modes, forming יי (*yod, yod*) and יי (*yod, yod*), yielding the names יהוה יהוה מצפץ מצפץ (*YHVH YHVH MTsPTs MTsPTs*). These names correspond to *Tif'eret* and *Yesod*, which form the center line in the *sefirot*. מצפץ (*MTsPTs*) is an encoded form of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) according to the system of letter

substitution known א״ת ב״ש (*at bash*), in which the last letter of the alphabet is substituted for the first, the penultimate for the second, etc. For the *Zohar, at bash* signifies the blending of opposites and hence is apposite for the center line of the *sefirot*.

The double name יהוה יהוה (*YHVH YHVH*) appears at the beginning of the thirteen qualities of compassion. See Exodus 34:6–7; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17b. According to Kabbalah, these qualities originate in *Keter*, the highest *sefirah* —the realm of total compassion, untainted by judgment, located on the center line above *Tif'eret* and *Yesod*.

On the name *MTsPTs*, see *Zohar* 1:20a; 2:132b, 262a (*Heikh*).

The "eleven branches" may derive from the total number of letters in יהוה (*YHVH*), אל (*El*), and אלהים (*Elohim*)—the divine names generated by the seven letters engraved in the pearl (see note 149), comprising the right and left sides of the sefirotic realm. Emanating on both sides of the sefirotic center, the branches thus total twenty-two, the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. According to Galante in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, the "eleven branches" pertain to the number of words in the opening and closing, and second and penultimate lines respectively of the *El Adon* ("God, Master") prayer, as explained below.

The precise sense of "they raise their head" is not entirely clear. Perhaps the *Zohar* intends that as the central line, the two *yod*s are able to obtain divine bounty from on high. Alternatively, this may refer to the additional activity of the *yod*s, as explained below.

See Cordovero's and Galante's glosses in *Or ha-Ḥammah* for various interpretations.

153. **The remaining ה (*he*)... אדני (*Adonai*)** The final ה of אהיה does not combine with another letter. On its own it generates the name *Adonai*, which is associated with *Shekhinah*.

154. **All these names protrude...** On the Sabbath the seven names are active. Their activity causes *Binah* to stir,

though She remains hidden.

155. **strikes those seven names…** *Binah* strikes and illuminates the seven names, apparently causing them to assume their place in the sefirotic realm. The name *Adonai* enters *Malkhut*, joined by the name יה (*Yah*)—the letter י (*yod*) signifying *Ḥokhmah* (while the tip of the *yod* denotes *Keter*), and the letter ה (*he*) signifying *Binah*—and together they bestow bounty on *Malkhut*. *Binah* encompasses *Malkhut*, and the spark from *Binah* that illuminated *Adonai* is "crowned"—it receives flow from above. On the name יה (*Yah*) and its association with *Malkhut*, cf. *Zohar* 2:215a.

156. **chariot and throne for the upper pearl…** The seven names, corresponding to the seven lower *sefirot*, are ignited by *Binah* and ramify into seventy branches, each name generating ten aspects. Together they are a throne for *Binah*, who although female is described here as King, reigning on the Sabbath. Enthroned, *Binah* is adorned with "crowns," namely flow from the highest reaches of the sefirotic realm.

On the seventy branches, see *Zohar* 2:83b, 89a, 133b, 160b.

157. **Those two letters…** Together, the י (*yod*) of אהיה and the י (*yod*) of יהו initiate a process in the sefirotic field whereby the right and left sides of the divine realm are reconfigured and harmonized. Pertaining to the center line, these two letters are perfectly suited to the task of balancing the right and left sides of the *sefirot*—the eleven branches on the right, and the eleven branches on the left, totaling the twenty-two letters of Torah. This process is described symbolically through the reordering of the *El Adon* ("God, Master") prayer of Sabbath morning—an acrostic that spans the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

The reconfiguration process turns on the particular structure of the *El Adon* prayer. The opening two lines—beginning with א (*alef*) and ב (*bet*) respectively—each contain five words; the last two lines of the prayer—beginning with

ש (*shin*) and ת (*tav*) respectively—each contain six words. (These four lines thus contain twenty-two words, a microcosm of the alphabetic macrocosm.) The two *yod*s of the central sefirotic line (itself marked by the *at bash* cipher and the harmony of right and left; see above, note 152) ascend and descend throughout the letters of the acrostic, converting the value of the two opening lines from five words each to six words each, and the value of the two concluding lines from six words each to five words each. The *yod*s thus perform an *at bash* operation of sorts—turning the value of line א (*alef*) into the value of line ת (*tav*), and the value of line ב (*bet*) into the value of line ש (*shin*)—which symbolizes the balancing of the right and left sides of the *sefirot*.

The "twelve tribes" signify the two lines of six words each, whereas the "ten utterances" denote the two lines of five words each.

On the *El Adon* prayer, see *Zohar* 2:132a–b, 205b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 124. On earlier Ashkenazic and Sephardic sources for the significance of the number of words in the various lines of the prayer, see Ta-Shma, "Li-Mqorotav ha-Sifrutiyyim Shel Sefer ha-Zohar"; idem, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 30, 67. For various interpretations, see Cordovero in *Or ha-Ḥammah*; cf. Galante in *Or ha-Ḥammah; Matoq mi-Devash*; *Sullam*. See Sobol, "Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin," 50–52.

The "twelve tribes of supernal Israel" indicate the twelve potencies issuing from *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* ("Beauty of Israel"). See *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1; *Bahir* 64 (95); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 511–12; *Zohar* 1:76b (*ST*), 199a; 2:2a, 58b, 62b, 64b, 66b, 229b; 3:78a, 96b, 118b, 134b (*IR*), 148b, 209a; *ZḤ* 2a (*SO*), 55a, 62a (*ShS*), 63d (*ShS*).

The "ten utterances" refer to the ten utterances by which the world was created. In Kabbalah they signify the ten *sefirot*. See M *Avot* 5:1; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; B, 36;

Bereshit Rabbah 17:1; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 32a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3 (and Luria's n. 73); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21, 108a–b (and Ish Shalom's n. 138); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 506; *Zohar* 1:15a, 16b, 30a, 104b (*MhN*); 2:14b (*MhN*), 34b, 67a, 75b, 156b, 169b, 178b (*SdTs*), 200b; 3:11b–12a, 73a; *ZḤ* 2d (*MhN*); Duran, *Magen Avot* on 5:1.

158. **As for the lower pearl…** Inscribed with the name *Adonai*, the lower pearl—*Malkhut*—gazes upon *Binah* (enthroned upon Her throne *Tif'eret*), whereupon She receives the supernal letters and begins to shine. It is only because She already contains the spark of *Binah*—in the form of the name *Adonai*—that *Malkhut* can bear *Binah*'s brilliance.

Here, the throne upon which *Binah* rests is described as the "throne of seventy-two," whereas previously it was described as comprised of seventy branches (see above at note 156). Presumably this change is connected with the eighteen intermediate lines in the prayer *El Adon*, namely the letters ג (*gimel*) through ר (*resh*), which each contain four words, thereby totaling seventy-two.

159. **pearl cleaves to pearl…** On Sabbath, *Binah* and *Malkhut* are perfectly aligned and united. The "praise" refers to the prayer *El Adon* (God, Master).

160. **letters sparkle… peg… between pearl and pearl…** The sparkling letters of the names אהיה (*Ehyeh*) and יהו (*Yaho*)—which exist in a latent state within *Binah* and are activated and articulated only on the Sabbath—become the very peg that unites *Binah* and *Malkhut*. The "peg" is the letter ו (*vav*) of the name יהוה (*YHVH*), signifying the six *sefirot* that are grouped around *Tif'eret* (since *vav* has the numerical value of six); it unites the first ה (*he*), signifying *Binah*, with the second ה (*he*), denoting *Malkhut*.

Once the *sefirot* are reconfigured—and *Binah* and *Malkhut* thus united—the Name of Forty-two Letters and the Name of Seventy-two Letters are complete. As noted above, the divine names אהיה and יהו each have a numerical value of 21;

following their combination, they attain the summed numerical value of 42. As for the number 72, it refers to the 18 intermediate lines in the prayer *El Adon*, each containing 4 words, thereby totaling 72. Each of the divine names pertains to ("is called") Sabbath.

On the divine names of forty-two and seventy-two letters, see note 30.

161. **twenty-fifth commandment…** According to a simple reading of the narrative (Exodus 12:34, 39), the Israelites carried off their dough and baked *matsot*, "unleavened bread," because of the haste with which they were driven from Egypt—their sourdough not having had time to ferment. According to the *Zohar*, the Israelites understood the deeper significance of eradicating leaven—namely banishing the evil impulse and the demonic forces from their midst—and acted accordingly, thereby fulfilling a commandment enjoined on future generations. Strictly speaking, in verse 19 only Moses and Aaron are instructed about the eradication of leaven. It is only in 13:7, after the exodus and after the people have baked *matsot*, that this command is relayed to the people. Cf. Naḥmanides on Exodus 12:39; see Cordovero's gloss in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc.

According to the *Zohar, matsah* symbolizes *Shekhinah*; *ḥamets*, "leaven," symbolizes the evil impulse and by extension the demonic realm. Annually on the eve of Passover, the last remnants of leaven are burned, which symbolizes the extermination of the evil impulse and demonic forces.

See the prayer attributed to Rabbi Tanḥum in JT *Berakhot* 4:2, 7d: "May it be Your will, *YHVH* my God and God of my fathers, that You break and destroy the yoke of the evil impulse from our heart. For You created us to do Your will, and we must do Your will; You desire it and we desire it. So who prevents it? The leaven in the dough."

See BT *Berakhot* 17a and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *se'or she-ba-issah*; *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Noaḥ* 4; *Zohar* 1:142a–b, 226b; 2:40a, 182a, 183a–b; 3:95a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 132 (and Wolfson's note); Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 221–22; Hecker, *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals*, 105–7. See also *piqquda* twenty-seven, *Zohar* 2:41a (*Piq*; below, page 287). See also Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 156; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Ḥamets u-Matsah* 2:1.

162. **twenty-sixth commandment…** See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 157; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Ḥamets u-Matsah* 7:1; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 133–34. See also M *Pesaḥim* 10:4–5; Passover Haggadah. On the remembrance of the exodus as extending into the messianic era, see M *Berakhot* 1:5; BT *Berakhot* 12b; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 16. On delighting in the *Shekhinah* in the world to come, see BT *Berakhot* 17a.

According to Cordovero in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc., narrating the story activates the same divine powers that were active during the exodus itself.

On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1316–17.

163. **assembles His entire retinue…** "Retinue" renders פמלייא (*pamalya*), "family," which denotes the celestial entourage, who assemble to hear the narration of the exodus below.

164. **power and might are added…** Narration of the exodus augments the divine being.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 25:1 in the name of Rabbi Yuda son of Rabbi Simon: "Whenever the righteous perform the will of the blessed Holy One, they add strength to the Dynamis, as is said: *And so, let my Lord's strength, pray, be great* (Numbers 14:17)." See also *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:33; *Zohar* 2:32b, 155b. On this concept, see Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 158–59.

165. **publicize and recount before Him all that He has done…** Just as one is required to praise and thank God for the exodus, so one is required to praise and thank God for all the personal miracles and beneficence that one has enjoyed.

See Galante's comments in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ad loc., noting that the requirement to praise God for everything follows Naḥmanides' enumeration of the commandments—on which see the latter's additional positive commandment no. 15 and his comments at the end of no. 7 in Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*. On the rabbinic concept of "publicizing the miracle," see *Zohar* 2:174a.

166. **recounts and specifies his sins…** Just as one recounts miracles even though God knows all, so one should recount one's sins—even though He knows what we have done and knows whether our repentance is sincere. Through confession, one pre-empts the Accuser (who begins his case with a general call for justice and only then proceeds to specify sins) and is thus able to escape the full weight of judgment. (Confession is thus a technical stratagem, like the contemporary practice of filing papers before a deadline so as to avoid a tougher penalty.)

Outwitting the Accuser—or the Other Side—is a recurrent theme in the *Piqqudin*. See below, p. 297 and n. 190.

On the need to confess and specify one's sins, see *Tosefta Yoma* 4:14; JT *Yoma* 8:9, 45c; BT *Yoma* 86b; Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 73; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 1:1; *Zohar* 3:20a, 195a–b, 231a. (On opposition to declaring one's sins, see BT *Berakhot* 34b, *Sotah* 7b; *Zohar* 2:186a.) On the advantages of confession, cf. BT *Bava Qamma* 14b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Geneivah* 3:8, on the principle of confession leading to exemption even when followed by incriminating evidence.

“Opening” renders פטרא דפומא (*pitra de-fuma*), modeled after the Hebrew idiom פתחון פה (*piṯḥon peh*), “open mouth,” meaning “pretext; opportunity for fault-finding.” See *Zohar* 1:89a (*ST*); 2:14b (*MhN*), 262a (*Heikh*); 3:296b (*IZ*). See below, page 306.

167. **came before You brazenly, is rejecting…** If one specified one’s sins sincerely, the Accuser departs and one is forgiven. If, however, one enumerated sins but without engaging in genuine *teshuvah*, the Accuser presides and resumes his prosecutorial role. The insincere penitent came before God “brazenly” insofar as he openly recounted his sins. Had he done so sincerely, such open disclosure would have been acceptable and beneficial. Lacking sincerity, however, it is considered impudent and shameless.

See BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rav Kahana: “I consider one who openly recounts his sin impudent”; and *Tosafot*, ad loc.

168. **twenty-seventh commandment…** When Israel left Egypt, they departed the domain of the demonic powers and entered *Shekhinah*. *Matsah*—unleavened bread, the bread of poverty—symbolizes *Shekhinah*, the portal into the sefirotic realm, the mystery of faith.

See *Zohar* 1:157a, 226b; 2:40a, 61b, 182a, 183a–b; 3:95a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 135; *Zohar* 2:40b (*Piq*; above, page 284); Hecker, *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals*, 105–7.

On *Matsah* as bread of poverty and hence a symbol of *Shekhinah*—who is “poor,” lacking the flow from above—see *Zohar* 1:33a, 47b, 157a, 235b, 238a, 245b–246a, 250b; 2:40a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 112–13. Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 115b–116a.

See also Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 158; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Ḥamets u-Matsah* 6:1.

169. **twenty-eighth commandment…** On the passover offering (usually rendered as “paschal lamb,”

although a kid goat would also qualify), see Exodus 12:3–13, 21–27, 43–49. See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 55; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Qorban Pesaḥ* 1:1; *Zohar* 2:39b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1255–56.

170. **the moon begins to shine…** The passover offering is to be taken on the tenth of the month and then *kept by you until the fourteenth*, when it is slaughtered (Exodus 12:6). The four-day waiting period corresponds with the ripening of *Shekhinah*'s powers, which reach their apogee at the full moon.

According to the *Zohar*, as the day darkens, judgment looms—an appropriate time to slaughter the paschal lamb, which symbolizes the false god of the Egyptians. See Genesis 46:34; Exodus 8:22; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 5; *Targum Onqelos*, Exodus 8:22; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:17; *Shemot Rabbah* 11:3; 16:2–3; Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 8:22; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:46; Naḥmanides on Exodus 12:3; *Zohar* 2:18a (*MhN*), 39b, 40b, 41b (*Piq*), 237a; 3:250b–251b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1255. On evening time as signifying judgment, see *Zohar* 1:132b, 182b; 2:21a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 67, 87. For a different explanation of the twilight time for the offering, see *Zohar* 2:39b–40a.

171. **remove the slime from the presence of the Holy Covenant…** The passover offering serves to remove the demonic foreskin from *Yesod*—the divine phallus, the conduit of the divine flow. Accordingly, the sacrifice can be eaten only by the circumcised (those who possess the holy covenant). See *Zohar* 1:260a (*Hash*); 3:73a.

On foreskin as signifying the demonic realm, see *Zohar* 1:13a, 18a, 35b, 91b, 103b; 2:244b, 266a–b (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (68); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 13a. See *Zohar* 3:43b–44a (*Piq*; above, page 252).

Exodus 12:9 specifies how the paschal lamb is to be consumed: *Do not eat any of it raw, nor in any way cooked*

in water, but fire-roasted. According to the *Zohar*, the "wafting aroma" of the offering was delightful for the Israelites, yet an affront to the Egyptians—the stinking stench of their burning god. See 2:18a (*MhN*), 237a. One who is already sated does not delight in the eating as much as in the aroma, hence the offering is to be eaten when sated. See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 6; *Tosefta Pesaḥim* 5:3; BT *Pesaḥim* 70a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Qorban Pesaḥ* 8:3; *Zohar* 3:251b.

172. **blood of the paschal lamb... and the blood of the covenant...** On the Israelites' marking their doors with both the blood of the paschal lamb and the blood of circumcision, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:13; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29; *Zohar* 2:35b; 3:95a, 149a.

According to rabbinic tradition, the Israelites circumcised themselves before leaving Egypt. See *Shemot Rabbah* 17:3: "By [the merit of] two bloods, Israel were redeemed from Egypt: by the blood of the paschal lamb and by the blood of circumcision, as is said: *I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, and I said to you, 'In your blood, live!' And I said to you, 'In your blood, live!'* (Ezekiel 16:6)—by the blood of the paschal lamb and by the blood of circumcision." The original midrashic interpretation of "two bloods" is apparently based on the repetition of the exclamation *In your blood, live!*, though possibly on the plural בדמיך (*be-damayikh*), literally *in your bloods*.

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 5; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:13; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:6; 7:4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 17, 86b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:12; 5:2; *Rut Rabbah* 6:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29; *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 4; *Shemot Rabbah* 19:5; *Midrash Tehillim* 114:5; *Zohar* 3:91b. Cf. Exodus 12:44, 48; Joshua 5:5; BT *Kareitot* 9a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 18; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 70b; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:12; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:3; 14:12; Rashi on Exodus 12:6.

On the purifying power of hyssop, see Leviticus 14:4, 6; Numbers 19:6, 18; *Zohar* 2:35b, 80b.

See Exodus 12:23: *YHVH will pass through to strike Egypt; and when He sees the blood* [*of the paschal lamb*] *on the lintel and on the two doorposts, YHVH will pass over the entrance and will not allow the Destroyer to enter your house to strike*. See *Zohar* 2:35b–36a.

173. **foreshadowing of the ultimate redemption…** The slaughter of the paschal lamb in Egypt on the eve of the exodus—whereby Israel smashed the demonic forces by which they were enslaved—is a token of the future "slaughter" of the evil impulse at the redemption.

See BT *Sukkah* 52a, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah: "In the time to come, the blessed Holy One will bring the evil impulse and slaughter it in the presence of the righteous and the wicked. To the righteous it will have the appearance of a huge mountain; and to the wicked it will have the appearance of a hair thread. These will weep, and those will weep. The righteous will weep, saying, 'How were we able to conquer such a huge mountain!' The wicked will weep, saying, 'How is it that we were unable to conquer this hair thread!'" See also *Zohar* 1:190b.

174. **the mark of the letter י (*yod*)…** The sign of circumcision. The three *yod*s (on the two doorposts and on the lintel) may signify a divine name—or as elsewhere in the *Zohar*, the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Din*, and *Tif'eret*. Either way, the combined blood of circumcision and blood of the paschal lamb overpowers the demonic foreskin. See *Zohar* 2:35b; 3:95a, 149a. Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 1:36, 17:3.

In rabbinic literature, the mark of circumcision is identified with the י (*yod*) of the divine name שדי (*Shaddai*), which is also the initial letter of יהוה (*YHVH*). See *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14, *Shemini* 8; *Zohar* 1:13a, 56a, 60a, 89a, 93a, 95a–b; 2:3b, 36a, 87b, 90a, 216b, 235a; 3:13b, 73a, 91a, 142a (*IR*), 215b, 220a, 256a (*RM*), 266a; Wolfson, "Circumcision and the Divine Name"; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48.

Exodus 12:7 reads in full: *They shall take from the blood, and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel, on the houses in which they will eat it*. For the full verse of Exodus 12:23, see above, note 172.

I have followed the reading in PR13. O21 reads: "on one, the mark of the letter י (*yod*); on another, the mark of the letter ה (*he*); and on the other, the mark of the letter ו (*vav*)."

175. **why is it written *and will not allow the Destroyer…*** The phrasing implies that the Destroyer is the agent of destruction rather than God, seemingly contradicting the earlier statement in Exodus 12:12: *I will pass through the land of Egypt on this night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt from human to beast, and upon all the gods of Egypt I will render judgment—I YHVH*.

The same problem is raised in *Zohar* 3:149a. According to Exodus 12:29, God was indeed the agent: *It happened in the middle of the night that YHVH struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and every firstborn of the beasts*. Here, the Destroyer merely accompanies God, seeking a reason to accuse Israel. Seeing the blood of circumcision on the two sides of the door, he is forced to flee.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 17:5: "*YHVH will pass through to strike Egypt* (Exodus 12:23). Some say through a messenger; some say the blessed Holy One Himself."

In return for God's having slain the Egyptian firstborn and spared the Israelites, firstborn Israelites must henceforth be redeemed. See Exodus 13:11–15; Numbers 3:13.

"On two sides" renders בתרין סטרין (*bitrein sitrin*), presumably meaning the two sides of the doorposts, or the two doorposts and the lintel. Alternatively, "in two modes,"

implying both the blood of circumcision and the blood of the paschal lamb—the "twofold" smashing of the foreskin.

176. ***on matsot and bitter herbs…*** As noted above (see note 168), *matsah* symbolizes *Shekhinah*. The requirement to combine *matsah* with bitter herbs signifies *Shekhinah*'s participation in the bitter suffering of the Israelites.

Numbers 9:11 describes the occasion of the second passover offering (*Pesaḥ Sheni*; see the next *piqquda*). Similar phrasing appears in Exodus 12:8 describing the first paschal lamb: *They shall eat the meat on this night, fire-roasted, with matsot and with bitter herbs shall they eat it*. Actually, in the Masoretic text of both verses the full spelling appears: מצות (*matsot*), unleavened bread, with a *vav*. The deficient spelling—מצת (*matsot*)—appears in Exodus 12:8; 13:6. According to the *Zohar*, the deficient spelling of *matsot*, minus the letter ו (*vav*)—whose numerical value of six symbolizes the six central *sefirot* of the divine male grouped around *Tif'eret*—indicates the poor state of *Shekhinah*, lacking the flow from above, which is aptly signified by *matsah*, the bread of poverty. See *Zohar* 2:40a, 182b; Minḥat Shai on Exodus 12:15, 18; 23:15; Leviticus 2:4; 7:12; Numbers 9:11; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 50, 131–32, n. 125.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "Wherever Israel went in exile, *Shekhinah*, as it were, went into exile with them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them.… When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them.… And when in the future they return, *Shekhinah*, as it were, will return with them."

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Ta'anit* 1:1, 64a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:54; BT *Megillah* 29a; *Zohar* 1:68b–69a, 120b, 134a, 149a, 159b, 182a, 211a, 237a; 2:2a–b, 4b (*MhN*), 82a, 189b, 216b; 3:6a–b, 74a–b, 114b–115a, 297b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23; idem, *Sheqel ha-*

Qodesh, 73–74 (92–93); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:382–85.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 56; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Qorban Pesaḥ* 8:1–2.

Exodus 1:14 reads in full: *They embittered their lives with harsh labor, with mortar and bricks and every work in the field, all their work, which they made them work with crushing labor*.

177. ***and no bone shall you break in it…*** According to Exodus 12:46, the bones of the paschal lamb must not be broken. According to the *Zohar*, this curious stricture is part of the humiliation of the Egyptian god, the lamb. Seeing the recognizable bones of their god dragged through the street was more painful to the Egyptians than the ten plagues. On the lamb as the god of the Egyptians and its public shaming, see above, note 170. See especially *Zohar* 2:18a (*MhN*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:38a.

"Another aspect" renders גוונא אחרא (*gavna aḥra*). *Aḥra* means "other, alien" and so perhaps the *Zohar* intends *Sitra Aḥra*, the Other Side.

178. **greatest annulment of idolatry—from their side…** The drama of humiliation continues with the Egyptians pulverizing their own god! By performing the act themselves the humiliation is complete, and the nullification of idolatry especially effective and glorious. See BT *Avodah Zarah* 64b, discussing the requirement for idolators to annul their idols. See also *Zohar* 2:69a, where God is glorified by the nations repudiating idolatry.

179. **thirtieth commandment…** See Numbers 9:6–13, which outlines the provision for those who had been rendered impure by contact with a corpse or were on a distant journey to have a second chance to offer the passover offering, a month later.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 57; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot*

Qorban Pesaḥ 5:1. See *Zohar* 3:152b.

180. **Its time has passed!** Israel entered *Shekhinah* on the eve of the exodus. If the passover offering is in commemoration of this, and specifically aligned with Her illumination, how can one make the offering a month late? On Israel's entry into the mystery of faith, see *Zohar* 2:41a (*Piq*; above, p. 287 and n. 168).

181. **does not remove Her crowns and adornments for thirty days…** Once illuminated and adorned by the initial passover offering on the 14th of Nisan, *Shekhinah* remains in Her finery, primed with flow from above, for thirty days.

See *Sha'arei Teshuvah* (*Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim*), 336: "'They do not withhold ornaments from the bride all the thirty days [of a mourning period, lest she be repugnant to her husband]' (BT *Ketubbot* 4a, *Yoma* 78b)…. The proof is the second passover offering… for the bride's ornaments are still with her."

In rabbinic Hebrew כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra'el*), "Assembly of Israel," normally denotes the people of Israel. The Midrash on the Song of Songs describes an allegorical love affair between the maiden (the earthly assembly of Israel) and her lover ("the Holy One, blessed be He"). In the *Zohar, Keneset Yisra'el* can refer to the earthly community but also (often primarily) to *Shekhinah*, the divine feminine counterpart of the people—the aspect of God most intimately connected with them.

מטרוניתא (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron; married woman; noble lady," and it is often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the divine wife.

According to *Nitsotsei Orot*, פסח שני (*Pesaḥ Sheni*), "the second passover offering," is being read as פתח שני (*petaḥ sheni*), "the second opening."

182. **thirty-first commandment…** *Omer* means "sheaf" and refers to the sheaf of newly harvested barley offered in the Temple on the second day of *Pesaḥ* (according to the

rabbinic interpretation). The “counting of the *omer*” refers to the seven-week-long activity of ceremonially counting days, during the harvest season between the second day of *Pesaḥ* and the eve of *Shavu’ot*. See Leviticus 23:15–16: *You shall count for yourselves from the morrow of the sabbath, from the day you bring the sheaf of elevation, seven complete weeks shall they be. Until the morrow of the seventh sabbath you shall count fifty days, and you shall bring forward a new grain offering to YHVH*. See also Deuteronomy 16:9.

The Israelites’ slavery in Egypt is imagined as subjugation by the forces of impurity. Though they had begun their process of liberation and purification during their exodus, this process was not yet complete; it would be so only on *Shavu’ot*, when they would receive the Torah at Mt. Sinai. See next note. See *Zohar* 3:97a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 137.

The complete *Hallel* (consisting of Psalms 113–118) is recited only at the *seder* and on the first day (or in the Diaspora at both *seders* and on the first two days), whereas on the intermediate and last days of *Pesaḥ* the *Hallel* is recited in an abbreviated form (omitting the first parts of Psalms 115 and 116). See BT *Ta’anit* 28b, *Arakhin* 10a–b; *Zohar* 2:182b–183a, 277b (*Tosafot*); 3:95b; *TZ* 13, 28b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 136; Joseph Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 2:72–73.

According to one midrashic tradition, the complete *Hallel* is not recited on the intermediate and last days of *Pesaḥ* because so many Egyptians drowned in the Red Sea—based on the principle *When your enemy falls, do not rejoice* (Proverbs 24:17). See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*, add. 2, p. 458; *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Leviticus 654, Proverbs 960; Zedekiah Anav, *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, 174.

Cf. BT *Megillah* 10b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “What is the meaning of the verse *One did not draw near the other all night* (Exodus 14:20)? The ministering angels

[referred to as *one* and *the other* in Isaiah 6:3] wanted to sing, but the blessed Holy One said, 'My handiwork is drowning in the sea, and you are singing?'" See Vol. 5, p. 493, n. 858.

See also, Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 161; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Temidin u-Musafin* 7:22–25.

183. **Like a woman emerging from impurity...** Just as a menstruant counts seven days after her menstrual blood disappears, so Israel counted seven weeks from the Exodus on *Pesaḥ* to *Shavu'ot*—which became instituted as the counting of the *omer*. And just as after seven clean days, the wife may be reunited sexually with her husband, so following the seven weeks of counting, the divine male and female consummate their union on *Shavu'ot*. The seven weeks of the *omer*'s counting are thus the period of Israel's and the *Shekhinah*'s purification.

"Their Father's table" signifies *Shekhinah*, the first stage in Israel's connection to the divine realm. During the forty-nine days of counting the *omer*, Israel and *Shekhinah* ascend through the forty-nine gates of understanding (*Binah*), which are comprised in the seven lower *sefirot*, culminating in their entry into the World that is Coming—the *sefirah Binah*, the divine mother. See *Zohar* 3:97a–b, 97b (*Piq*; below, page 298); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1242; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 75–76. See also Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 186.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *When she becomes purified from her flux, she shall count for herself seven days and afterward she will be pure*. Actually, in the biblical context this verse applies not to normal menstruation but to an abnormal discharge of blood. On menstruation itself, see Leviticus 15:19–24. On the application of 15:28 to the menstruant, see Israel Ta-Shma's discussion in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 15:254–55. On the *Zohar*'s attitude

toward menstruation, see Koren, *Forsaken: The Menstruant in Medieval Jewish Mysticism*.

On Israel and God's table, see BT *Berakhot* 3a, where Rabbi Yose son of Ḥalafta encounters Elijah, who reveals to him God's frequent lament: "What can be done for the father who has exiled his children? And woe to the children who have been banished from their father's table!"

184. **World of the Male…** The commandment to count the *omer* is incumbent on men only. As a time-bound commandment, women are exempt. The *Zohar* adds a further reason for this arrangement: the count pertains to "World of the Male," the configuration of *sefirot* from *Binah* (or *Ḥokhmah*) through *Yesod*. In contrast, "Lower World" designates the divine female, *Shekhinah*. Because of its high sefirotic status, the count is performed standing. Whereas during *Pesaḥ*, Israel enters the World of the Female (signified by *matsah*), during the *omer* period, they enter the World of the Male. This trajectory mirrors the core idea of the *Piqqudin* (see above at note 4): one strives to pass from "general knowledge" of God, associated with *Malkhut*, to "particular knowledge," associated with the divine male.

On World of the Male, see *Zohar* 1:96a, 147a–b, 149a, 160b, 246a–247a, 248b; 2:127b; *ZḤ* 72b (*ShS*). On standing during the counting of the *omer* and its connection with "high" masculine sefirotic days, as well as women's exemption from this commandment, see 2:183a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 137–38. See also *Leqaḥ Tov*, Leviticus 23:16. On standing and sitting during various prayers, see *Zohar* 1:132b; 2:132b–133a, 183a. On women's exemption, see also Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 66; Liebes, "Ha-Zohar ke-Sefer Halakhah," 585–86.

185. **these fifty—they are forty-nine…** Apparently referring to the practice of actually counting forty-nine days and not the fiftieth day, which is the festival of *Shavu'ot*—itself commemorating the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. The forty-nine "days" allude to the forty-nine "faces" (or

“facets”) of Torah, as well as to the seven *sefirot* beneath *Binah*, whereas the fiftieth day alludes to *Binah* (“Jubilee”) Herself—source of *Tif’eret*, known as Torah. As Jubilee, *Binah* is the source of the seven Sabbaticals (*sefirot*) beneath Her. See *Zohar* 2:183a.

On not counting the fiftieth day, see Rashi on Leviticus 23:16; *Tosafot* on BT *Menaḥot* 65b, s.v. *katuv eḥad*; Asher ben Yeḥiel on BT *Pesaḥim* 10:40.

According to rabbinic tradition, every divine utterance of Torah includes “forty-nine facets [literally: faces] of ‘pure’ and forty-nine facets of ‘impure’”—that is, forty-nine ways by which something can be proven impure (and thus forbidden) and forty-nine ways by which the same thing can be proven pure (and thus permitted). See *Massekhet Soferim* 16:5; JT *Sanhedrin* 4:1, 22a; BT *Eruvin* 13b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:2, 4; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:4; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 8:1; *Tanḥuma, Bemidbar* 10, *Ḥuqqat* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 7, 18; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:2; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14, 58a–b, 62b; 21, 101a–b; *Midrash Tehillim* 12:4; *Zohar* 2:15b (*MhN*), 123a, 139b, 183a.

According to another rabbinic tradition, Torah has “seventy faces.” See *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:354); *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:15.

The number fifty is frequently associated with *Binah*, based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu’el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a), “Fifty gates of *binah* (understanding) were created in the world, and all were given to Moses except for one.” See Naḥmanides, *Peirush al ha-Torah*, intro, 3–4.

According to the Bible, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). After seven Sabbaticals comes the Jubilee, proclaimed every fifty years, when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus

25:8–55). See *Zohar* 2:83b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 138.

I have followed PR13 and the printed editions here. According to O21, the last sentence reads: “These are the forty-nine days between Sabbatical and Jubilee.”

186. **one is hidden…** If we count only forty-nine days, why then does the Torah state specifically: *Until the morrow of the seventh sabbath you shall count fifty days*? There are indeed fifty days; but the fiftieth day—corresponding to the fiftieth gate of understanding—is hidden.

This passage is obscure and commentators differ. According to *Matoq mi-Devash*, “the hidden” entity that is revealed on *Shavu’ot*, the fiftieth day, signifies *Keter*, the highest *sefirah*, who animates all the *sefirot*; hence the entire sefirotic world in general relies on it, as does *Malkhut* in particular. According to Tishby, “the hidden” that is revealed designates *Binah* Herself, who acts as best man (perhaps maid of honor) at the wedding of Her children *Tif’eret* and *Malkhut*, which transpires on the fiftieth day (cf. *Zohar* 3:98a–b). Finally, based on the phrase “the world relies upon it” (or “… rests upon it”)—which would seem to indicate *Yesod*, given the usual Zoharic construal of Proverbs 10:25 as *the righteous one is the foundation of the world*—Sobol suggests that it refers to the divine phallus that is revealed (and then concealed in the act of sexual union) on *Shavu’ot*.

See *Or ha-Ḥammah, Nitsotsei Orot, Sullam, Matoq mi-Devash*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1256 and his note 433; Sobol, “Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin,” 89–90.

I have followed the reading in O21. PR13, Cremona, and Mantua seem garbled; and the modern printed editions appear to have smoothed the text.

187. **thirty-second commandment…** According to the rabbinic interpretation of Leviticus 23:9–11, on the second day of *Pesaḥ* an *omer* of barley was brought to the priest as a springtime firstfruits offering. The biblical term עמר (*omer*)

means “sheaf,” but (based on Exodus 16:36) the Rabbis understood it as a unit of dry measure (about two quarts) equal to one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour, which was produced from the barley grain and then offered on the altar.

According to Numbers 5:11–31, a wife suspected of adultery is to be tested by being made to drink a potion; if she is guilty, *her belly will swell and her thigh sag* (ibid., 27). Before the potion is prepared, the jealous husband brings an offering for his wife, which is called *a grain offering of jealousy* and consists of *one-tenth of an ephah of barley flour* (ibid., 15).

The *Zohar* connects the *omer* offering brought on the second day of *Pesaḥ* with the barley offering of the suspected adulteress. Here, *Shekhinah* plays the role of the suspected adulteress, and the *omer* offering serves to purify Her of demonic contamination, enabling Her to unite with Her husband *Tif’eret* above, and the children of Israel below.

On the parallel between the *grain offering of jealousy* and the *omer* offering on the second day of *Pesaḥ*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 28:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 8:4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 18, 92b; *Zohar* 3:96a, 189a. According to the rabbinic texts, the grain offering of barley brings peace between husband and wife (assuming the wife’s acquittal in the trial by ordeal). Here the barley offering injects love between the celestial husband and wife.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 44; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Temidin u-Musafin* 7:11.

On *Matronita*, see above, note 181. *Matronita* and Her children “go together” not only because the offering brings them together and works to purify both, but also because they collaborate to outfox the Other Side, as explained below.

On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:396–97.

188. **Woman of Whoredom… Woman of Strength…** As explained in the following two paragraphs, the technicalities of the *omer* sacrifice prevent the Other Side from approaching *Shekhinah* and thus interfering in Her union with *Tif'eret*. Her purity assured, *Shekhinah* plays the role of the suspected adulteress, approaches the High Priest (here signifying *Ḥesed*), receives bounty from above, and adds vitality to *Tif'eret* through Her sexual union with Him.

"The Woman of Whoredom" (see Hosea 1:2), the demonic feminine, is the shadow side of the divine feminine, *Shekhinah*, "the Woman of Strength [or: Valor, Power]" (see Proverbs 12:4, 31:10). See *Zohar* 1:38b (*Heikh*); 2:148b, 245a (*Heikh*).

189. **Woman of Whoredom flees from the Sanctuary…** The demonic Lilith flees from the Sanctuary, namely *Shekhinah*, leaving Israel below with the Mystery of Faith, which signifies either *Shekhinah* in particular, or the sefirotic world in general.

190. **two sisters…** See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:9; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 6: "A story is told of two sisters who looked alike and one of whom was married in another town. The husband of one of them grew suspicious against her and sought to make her drink the bitter waters in Jerusalem. She went to the town where her married sister lived. Her sister said to her, 'What brings you here?' She replied, 'My husband wishes to make me drink the bitter waters and I am defiled.' Her sister said, 'I will go in your place and drink.' She replied, 'Go and do it.' What did she do? She donned her sister's clothes, went and drank the bitter waters and was found to be pure. When she returned home, her sister who had strayed came out to meet her and they embraced and kissed each other. As they kissed one another, she smelled the bitter waters and died instantly."

Here, the two sisters are the Woman of Strength, namely *Shekhinah*, and the Woman of Whoredom, namely Lilith, or the female demonic. Unlike the straying sister in

the rabbinic tale, the Woman of Whoredom (who, as her name implies, has definitely strayed) knows that should she get even the slightest whiff of *Shekhinah*, she will perish. Accordingly, she keeps her distance. The *omer* offering is thus a dramatic ruse devised by God to enable *Shekhinah* not only to enjoy intimacy with Israel without the Other Side interrupting their union, but also to be purified so as to unite with Her husband *Tif'eret*. See below, page 313, for further advice given by God to deceive the Other Side.

191. **thirty-third commandment…** As discussed in *piqquda* thirty-one (see above, p. 293 and nn. 182, 183, 185), during the seven weeks of the *omer*'s counting (beginning on the second day of *Pesaḥ* and concluding on the festival of *Shavu'ot*), *Shekhinah* and Israel are purified, and they ascend together through the forty-nine gates of understanding (the literal meaning of *Binah*), which are comprised in the seven lower *sefirot*, culminating in their entry into the World that is Coming—*Binah*, the divine mother. On *Shavu'ot*, the fiftieth day, commemorating the giving of the Torah, the male and female aspects of divinity consummate their union. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 139; *Zohar* 2:183a.

On the number fifty as associated with *Binah*, see above, note 185. On the evil impulse (the Woman of Whoredom) fleeing from *Shekhinah* (the Woman of Strength), see the previous *piqquda*. On the absence of the evil impulse on *Shavu'ot*, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 139 (and Wolfson's note); cf. BT *Shabbat* 145b–146a: "Rav Yosef taught, '… When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with slime. Israel who stood at Sinai—their slime ceased. Star-worshipers who did not stand at Mount Sinai—their slime did not cease.'" See also *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:15 (on 1:2); *Zohar* 1:52b; 2:183b, 193b.

192. עצרת **(*Atseret*)…** *Atseret* means "assembly, convocation, gathering" and is sometimes used, as here, to refer to *Shavu'ot* (see for example, M *Rosh ha-Shanah* 1:2). Here, *atseret* is given two interpretations: first, "stoppage" or

“restraining, cessation”—based on the verbal root עצר (*'tsr*), “to restrain”—pointing to the nullification and restraining of the evil impulse, which is thwarted by the *omer*; and secondly “gathering,” indicating the influx of the divine flow into *Shekhinah*, the Woman of Strength (see above, note 188).

On *atseret* as “gathering,” see *Zohar* 1:64a; 3:96b, 104b, 197a, 259b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 139. See *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, Leviticus 23:36, Numbers 29:35, Deuteronomy 16:8. On *atseret* as “stoppage” and “restraining,” cf. *Zohar* 3:197a.

Of the additional sacrifices for the festive days enumerated in Numbers 28–29, only regarding *Shavu'ot* is there no mention of a sin offering. Though Numbers 28:30 does specify *one goat to atone for you*, the distinctive wording חטאת (*ḥattat*), *for a sin offering*, is absent. The *Zohar* explains that in light of the nullification of the evil impulse and demonic powers achieved on *Shavu'ot*, there is no need to give an offering for sin—which is a payment to the Other Side, to assuage its powers. On the significance of the *ḥattat*, “sin offering,” see below at notes 199–200. On assuaging the demonic powers, see below, note 221.

193. **Why then is *weeks* written by itself…** Why doesn't the Torah call the festival “Seven Weeks”? According to the *Zohar*, “seven” can be assumed—the number *sheva* being implied in the name *shavu'ot*. Furthermore, the seven weeks of the *omer* period that leads to *Shavu'ot* correspond to the seven *sefirot* above, namely beneath *Binah*; and these seven *sefirot* in turn correspond to seven powers or aspects below, namely within *Shekhinah*. So, in fact there are fourteen powers activated by *Shavu'ot*. The lower powers are latent and hidden, and thus the Torah mentions only *weeks*, in general. See next note. See *Zohar* 2:183a.

The verse from Deuteronomy continues: *from when the sickle begins in the standing grain, you shall begin to count seven weeks*.

194. **When Solomon appeared, he particularized them…** In the days of Solomon, *Shekhinah*, "the moon," attained fullness—as indicated by Solomon's specifying ("particularizing") the seven powers within Her: *seven days*, signifying the seven *sefirot* beneath *Binah*, *and seven days*, signifying the seven powers within *Shekhinah*. Apparently, following the destruction of the Solomonic temple, *Shekhinah* reverted to Her prior condition, and Her powers once again returned to their hidden and latent state within the generality of the seven *sefirot* beneath *Binah*. The wording of the Torah allows for the full arc: before Solomon, during the Temple period, and following the destruction. Although the powers of *Shekhinah* are activated during the *omer* period and reach potency by *Shavu'ot*, apparently the *Zohar* intends that they are active from their place within the higher *sefirot*—and not, as in the days of Solomon, from their own place. See Sobol, "Ḥativat ha-Piqqudin," 44.

As noted in the first *piqquda* (above, p. 211 and n. 4), "particular" knowledge signifies a deeper level of understanding.

The verse in Kings, describing the celebration of the festival of *Sukkot*, reads in full: *Solomon observed the Feast at that time, and all Israel with him—a great assemblage from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt—before YHVH our God, seven days and seven days; fourteen days in all*. See *Zohar* 1:204b, 247a (both of which read the two sets of seven days as referring to the seven *sefirot* beneath *Binah* and the seven powers within *Shekhinah*).

According to the Midrash, just as the moon does not become full until the fifteenth day of its cycle, so it remained incomplete until the glorious reign of Solomon in the fifteenth generation from Abraham. See *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26: "When Solomon appeared, the disk of the moon became full."

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:12; *Zohar* 1:73b–74a, 150a, 223a, 225b, 238a, 243a, 249b–250a; 2:11a, 28b, 85a, 143a, 145a; 3:40b, 46a, 61a, 74b, 181b, 297a; *ZḤ* 37d, 83b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 24, 47.

195. **thirty-fourth commandment...** On the festival of *Shavu'ot*, two loaves of bread were brought as an offering of firstfruits, along with animal sacrifices. According to the *Zohar*, these two loaves correspond to "two *Shekhinah*s," namely the two female aspects of divinity, *Binah* and *Malkhut*, now perfectly aligned. The double loaves of Sabbath, which is nominally a commemoration of the double portion of manna that fell in the desert before the Sabbath, have the same significance. Between the two females is *Tif'eret*, the divine male, symbolized by "voice" and "Jacob."

The final sentence is somewhat obscure and the text may be faulty. Perhaps the *Zohar* intends that because Sabbath pertains to both *Binah* and *Malkhut*, two "breads" were (or are) "brought" (placed on the table) on the Sabbath. On the multiple sefirotic associations of Sabbath, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1223–26. Cf. *Matoq mi-Devash*, who, following Elijah of Vilna, emends the text to read "Because *Shavu'ot* is mystery of above and below, and all is *Shavu'ot*...." This reading is not supported by the manuscripts.

See Leviticus 23:17–18: *From your dwelling places you shall bring two loaves of elevation bread, two tenths of a measure of semolina they shall be, leavened they shall be baked, firstfruits to YHVH. You shall offer with the bread seven unblemished yearling lambs and one bull from the herd and two rams. They shall be an ascent offering to YHVH and their grain offering and their libations—a fire offering, a fragrant odor to YHVH*. See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment, no. 46; *Zohar* 2:183a.

According to the account in Exodus, when the Israelites went out to gather manna on the eve of Sabbath, they

found a double portion. The verse reads: *On the sixth day, they gathered double bread, two omers for each one*. On the requirement to have two Sabbath loaves (derived from this verse), see BT *Berakhot* 39b, *Shabbat* 117b. See also *Zohar* 1:246a.

On *Shekhinah* above and below, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit* 19 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:30); *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:33); *Sefer Razi'el*, 36a; *Bahir* 116 (171); Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 194; idem, *Sefer ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 412; *Zohar* 1:159b, 246a; 3:143b, 145a (*Piq*; above, page 274); Recanati on Genesis 1:6, 5a; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 179.

See also Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 189.

196. **thirty-fifth commandment...** This *piqquda* is not found in the printed editions. See below, note 201. See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 46; *Zohar* 2:183a.

197. **thirty-sixth commandment...** According to Numbers 28:15, on each new moon a goat must be brought as a sin-offering. See BT *Ḥullin* 60b: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Pazzi pointed out a contradiction. 'It is written: *God made the two great lights* (Genesis 1:16), and it is written [in the same verse]: *the greater light... and the lesser light*. The moon said before the blessed Holy One, "Master of the Universe! Can two kings possibly wear one crown? [i.e., How can both of us be *great?*]" He answered, "Go, diminish yourself!" She said before Him, "Master of the Universe! Because I have suggested something proper I should make myself smaller?" He replied, "Go and rule by day and night." She said, "But what is the value of this? What good is a lamp at noon?."... Seeing that her mind was uneasy [that she could not be consoled], the blessed Holy One said, "Bring an atonement for Me because I diminished the moon."' As was said by Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish: 'Why is the goat offered on the new moon distinguished by the

phrase *to* [or: *for*] *YHVH* (Numbers 28:15)? The blessed Holy One said, "Let this goat be an atonement for My having made the moon smaller."'"

According to the *Zohar*, the diminution of the moon symbolizes the vulnerability of *Shekhinah* to demonic forces. The new-moon offering serves to remove the demonic contamination from *Shekhinah* so that She can be renewed; it also draws divine flow from high in the sefirotic realm to the lower *sefirot*—and on to *Shekhinah* and the world below.

On the diminution of the moon, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 6, 51; *Zohar* 1:19b–20a, 181a–b; 2:138a, 144b, 147b–148a, 219b; 3:79b; *ZḤ* 14a (*MhN*), 70d–71a (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 189; idem; *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 35b; Scholem, "Parashah Ḥadashah," 429.

On the new-moon offering, see *Zohar* 1:64a, 65a, 122b, 138b; 2:33a, 185a, 238a, 269a; 3:38b, 79b, 248a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 125; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:893.

198. **Then flow gushes toward Her...** Once the demonic slime is removed by means of the new-moon goat offering, *Shekhinah* (known as "the Sanctuary" and as "the moon") receives the divine flow from above.

199. **(*ḥattat*), *sin, crouches at the opening*** Numbers 28:15 describes the monthly goat offering as *ḥattat, a sin offering, to* [or: *for*] *YHVH*. The *Zohar* connects this *ḥattat* with the *ḥattat*, "sin," of Genesis 4:7. Hence, because sin lies at the *opening*, that is, because the demonic slime is covering *Shekhinah*—who is the opening of the sefirotic realm—Israel must offer a sin-offering, an expiation, to remove that slime.

The verse in Genesis reads: *At the opening crouches sin, and for you is its desire, but you will rule over it*. On the *opening* as designating *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:36b, 54b. Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, as in rabbinic texts, the crouching sin refers to the evil impulse. See BT *Berakhot* 61a;

Qiddushin 30b; *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16; *Midrash Tehillim* 119:64; *Zohar* 1:165b, 179a; 2:219b.

200. ***a sin offering for YHVH…*** Of all the festive goat sin offerings, only the goat of the new moon is described as *to* [or: *for*] *YHVH* (see Numbers 28–29). The phrase *one goat as a sin offering to YHVH* is read as follows: *one goat for the ḥattat*, that is, to remove the *ḥattat*—the demonic slime—*for YHVH*, so that the central male *sefirot* grouped around *Tif'eret* (signified by *YHVH*) can pour divine flow onto *Shekhinah*.

On this sacrifice as "atonement," see BT *Ḥullin* 60b, quoted above, note 197. In addition to being an atonement, this goat is also a "purgation" (another meaning of כפרה, *kapparah*), since it purges and cleanses "the Sanctuary," namely *Shekhinah*.

201. **thirty-seventh commandment…** Commandments thirty-seven through forty-one are not found in the printed editions. Each of them pertains to the additional (*musaf*) sacrifice offered on the sacred days. *Atseret* is an alternate rabbinic name for the festival of *Shavu'ot*. See Numbers 28–29; Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandments, nos. 41, 42, 43, 45, 47. See above, note 196. Cf. Joseph of Hamadan's extensive discussion of the kabbalistic significance of the additional offerings in his *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, ad loc.

202. **forty-second commandment…** The new moon of Tishrei marks Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment. The arousal of judgment empowers the demonic Accuser. He then obscures the compassionate light of *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the moon. She is the entrance to the sefirotic realm and the instrument of divine judgment, sometimes pictured as the Court of Justice.

In the verse in Psalms, the rare word *ba-keseh* apparently means *on the full moon*. In rabbinic literature, it is derived from the root כסה (*ksh*), "to cover," and understood as referring to the new moon (specifically the new moon of Tishrei), when the moon is almost totally concealed. See

Vayiqra Rabbah 29:6; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 8a–b, 34a; *Beitsah* 16a; *Sanhedrin* 11b, 96b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:6; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 39, 166a; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:5; *Zohar* 1:114b; 2:184a, 267b (*Heikh*); 3:98b, 100b, 231b, 275a. Cf. Proverbs 7:20.

See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 118–121 which has many parallels with this *piqquda*; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 13a.

See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16a: "All are judged on Rosh Hashanah." See also M *Rosh ha-Shanah* 1:2. On Rosh Hashanah in the *Zohar*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1243–46.

On the commandment to blast the shofar, see Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment, no. 170; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shofar* 1:1–3.

203. **the blessed Holy One made him...** The demonic Accuser, threatening as he is, was created by God to serve the divine purpose.

In context, the phrase from Ecclesiastes reads: *God* עשה (*asah*), *has made it so* [or: *acted*; *has done it*], *that they be in awe of Him*. Reading the word *asah* as "made," the *Zohar* understands the phrase to mean *God made that they be in awe of Him*, thus requiring further specification of what He made and what is the source of awe. On this verse, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 121; cf. BT *Shabbat* 31b; *ZḤ* 5d (*MhN*).

See BT *Bava Batra* 16a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same."

204. **Likewise, the officer of the court below...** The celestial bailiff, otherwise known as the demonic Accuser, functions like an earthly officer of the court (the court prosecutor). Because God loves justice, the officer of the court is permitted to lock the doors of the courthouse until his claims are heard. As explained in the following

paragraph, the celestial bailiff too locks the (heavenly) door. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 119.

For the formulation "there is Judgment and a Judge," see JT *Sanhedrin* 10:2, 28d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 26:6; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:3; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:11; *Zohar* 1:72a, 87b; 2:91a.

205. **conceal the entrance of the King…** Just as the officer of the earthly court locks the doors until judgment is rendered, so the bailiff—the celestial prosecutor—locks the sefirotic door, *Shekhinah*. This is evident by the moon's being "covered" (in shadow). Even though God already knows the outcome of the trial, He "desires only by judgment," namely only in accordance with due process. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 119.

On the correspondence between above and below—a cardinal kabbalistic principle—see *Zohar* 1:38a (*Heikh*), 57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 205b; 2:5a, 15b, 20a (last three *MhN*), 48b, 82b, 144a, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:45b, 65b; *ZḤ* 15a, 19a (both *MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. On the similar Hermetic formulation, see *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262.

206. **eyes of *YHVH*…** See Zechariah 4:10: *These seven are the eyes of YHVH, ranging over the whole earth*. See also 2 Chronicles 16:9: *For the eyes of YHVH range over the entire earth*. See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*), 241a; 2:129a, 251b (*Heikh*), 252a (*Heikh*); 3:293b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 66.

207. **a certain hall… Two scribes…** See *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*); 2:251a–b (*Heikh*), describing the fourth hall of holiness, the site of judgment. On the scribes, see also M *Sanhedrin* 4:3; *Zohar* 2:51b; *ZḤ* 61d (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (81).

"Ring" renders the obscure פלקא (*palqa*). See Lonzano, *Sefer ha-Ma'arikh*, 80; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David* , 78.

On the motif of black fire on white fire (describing the writing of the Torah), see JT *Sheqalim* 6:2, 49d; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:12; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:12.

208. **plead his favor…** Cf. BT *Shabbat* 32a: "These are a person's advocates: repentance and good deeds. And even if nine hundred and ninety-nine plead his guilt, while one pleads his favor, he is saved, as is said: *If he has an angel over him, an advocate, one among a thousand to vouch for his uprightness, then He is gracious to him and says, 'Spare him from descending to the Pit…'* (Job 33:23–24). Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Rabbi Yose the Galilean says, 'Even if nine hundred and ninety-nine parts of that angel are in his disfavor and one part is in his favor, he is saved, as is said: *an advocate, one among a thousand* (ibid. 23).'"

209. **What need has He of all this…** The heavenly tribunal is not needed by God who already knows the outcome. Its function is to highlight divine due process and God's delight in acquittal. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 120.

"Pretext" renders פטרא דפומא (*pitra de-fuma*), modeled after the Hebrew idiom פתחון פה (*pitḥon peh*), "open mouth," meaning "opportunity for fault-finding." See *Zohar* 1:89a (*ST*); 2:14b (*MhN*), 262a (*Heikh*); 3:296b (*IZ*). See above, page 286.

210. **ponder the revealed and thereby know the concealed…** The inner workings and machinations of the celestial court have been conveyed to the wise of Israel—namely the sages in general, and the masters of kabbalah in particular. Even in the absence of specific teachings, however, one could still discern the workings of the court above by examining the court below, since they reflect one another. On the theme "as above, so below," see note 205. See also *Zohar* 1:154a: "through revealed, one reaches concealed."

211. **He commanded to blast the shofar…** At the precise moment that the Accuser presents his case against Israel, the shofar is sounded—arousing divine compassion and muffling his claims. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 119–20.

212. **shofar… comprising fire, air, and water…** The sound of the shofar—generated by warm, moist breath—comprises three of the four elements and stimulates *Tif'eret* ("another voice"; the divine quality of compassion), which actually comprises *Gevurah, Ḥesed*, and *Tif'eret* (fire, water, and air). "Sound" and "voice" both render קלא (*qala*).

On the mystical significance of the shofar, see *Zohar* 1:114a–b; 2:81b, 184a–b, 238b, 250b (*Heikh*); 3:18b, 38b, 99b–100a, 261a; *ZḤ* 20c; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 119–20; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 96, 143–45; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 13b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1245.

On confounding Satan with the shofar, see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16a–b: "Why do we sound a plain blast and a tremolo blast while sitting and then again while standing? In order to confound Satan." See Rabbeinu Ḥananel on BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 35a (cited in *Nitsotsei Zohar*, 3:99b, n. 8); *Arukh*, s.v. *arev*; *Rashi* and *Tosafot*, BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16b, s.v. *kedei le-arbev*; *Zohar* 152a (*ST*); 2:196b, 237b–238a.

213. **Isaac ventures forth alone… summons Esau…** On Rosh Hashanah, which is the Day of Judgment, Isaac—signifying the *sefirah Din*, the divine aspect of Judgment—prevails. Isaac (Judgment) summons Esau (the demonic Accuser) to initiate proceedings by bringing "dishes"—namely the wicked deeds of humanity—before him. Judgment is usually tempered by Compassion, but on Rosh Hashanah it "detaches" and its potency is not ameliorated. See *Zohar* 3:258b; cf. *TZ* 21, 51a–b.

Genesis 27:1 introduces the story of Isaac's seeking to bless Esau: *When Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, he called Esau, his elder son, and said to him, "My*

son!" He answered, "Here I am." According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:5–6, "Because he justified the wicked [i.e., because Isaac loved and favored Esau], his eyes grew dim." Here, Isaac's eyes grow dim because of his collaboration with the demonic Accuser, who emerges from him. Cf. *Zohar* 1:16a.

On the demonic powers as darkening the face of creatures, see *Shemot Rabbah* 2:4: *"And darkness over the face of the abyss* (Genesis 1:2)—this is death, which darkens the face of creatures." See *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 4 referring to the Angel of Death; *Zohar* 1:40a (*Heikh*); 2:149b; *ZḤ* 80c (*MhN, Rut*).

214. ***Rebekah said to her son Jacob…*** Just as Isaac instructs Esau to prepare "dishes" and bring accusations, Rebekah (signifying *Shekhinah*) instructs Jacob (the people of Israel) to prepare their own "dishes"—namely prayers, *teshuvah*, and good deeds—to counter the demonic accusations. Then fed by Jacob, Isaac (Judgment) is tempered; and harmony is restored with Compassion (identified as *Jacob, voice*—the *sefirah Tif'eret*). Jacob (*Tif'eret*) causes the sweet divine flow of *Binah*—the World that is Coming—to fill and ameliorate Isaac, who upon inhaling the fragrance of good deeds and prayer turns from his fury.

See *Zohar* 3:258b; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 13b, 16b–17a; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 123.

The phrase "preserved wine" derives from BT *Berakhot* 34b: "What is implied by the verse: *No eye has seen*, [*O God, but You, what You will do for one who awaits you*] (Isaiah 64:3)? Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi said, 'The wine preserved in its grapes since the six days of creation.'" See *Zohar* 1:135b (*MhN*), 192a, 238b; 2:147a, 169b; 3:4a, 12b, 39b–40a, 93b; *ZḤ* 28b (*MhN*), 64c (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 130, 319.

On Jacob's bringing wine to Isaac, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 27:25; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 16; *Zohar* 1:142b; 3:189a, 258b.

On the world that is coming, see note 110.

215. **As soon as he blends with Jacob…** Sweetened by Jacob, Isaac (signifying divine judgment) relinquishes, and Israel are blessed. The timing is crucial, as Esau (the demonic Accuser) soon returns with a smor-gasbord of wicked deeds. See *Zohar* 3:258b. On these verses, cf. 1:143b–144a.

216. ***Esau seethed with resentment against Jacob…*** According to the narrative in Genesis, by the time Isaac becomes aware of the deception, it is too late—the blessing has already been bestowed on Jacob, who will remain blessed. In the celestial drama outlined here, by the time the demonic Accuser returns with his menu of sins to prosecute Israel, it is too late—Isaac, divine judgment, has already been sweetened by Jacob, signifying the people of Israel as well as the *sefirah Tif'eret*. So, Israel wins the (yearly) battle, although the war with Esau persists. As compensation, Esau receives *the fat of the earth*—the mighty of the world, the other nations in general, and perhaps Rome and Christendom in particular. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 123–24.

217. ***placate him with the tribute… goats… camels…*** The days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are known as the "Ten Days of Repentance" and culminate with the fast of Yom Kippur, when a bribe is offered to the demonic Accuser (see *piqquda* forty-four, *Zohar* 3:63a–b [*Piq;* below, p. 311 and n. 221]). The gift—or bribe—is in fact a single goat, though in accordance with the narrative in Genesis (describing Jacob's encounter with Esau upon his return to Canaan), it is described here as comprising numerous goats and camels. Whereas the "goats" readily correspond to the Yom Kippur scapegoat, the significance of the camels is more obscure and the *Zohar* offers two reasons: first, because the camel is associated with the demonic realm, and secondly, because camels signify deliverance from death. Jacob "takes

counsel" or "follows advice" insofar as the offering to placate the demonic powers is part of the suite of advice imparted by God to Israel, to outfox the Other Side. See below, page 313.

According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13, the serpent in the Garden of Eden resembled a camel; and Samael rode upon this creature when he descended from heaven and duped the first man. See *Bahir* 141 (200); *Zohar* 1:35b, 55a, 64a, 137b, 145b–146a, 153a, 160b, 169b, 228a; 2:236a, 242b–244a.

See BT *Berakhot* 56b: "If one sees a camel in a dream, death had been decreed upon him from heaven—and he has been delivered." See *Zohar* 2:236a, 268b.

On the four hundred "men" with Esau, see Genesis 32:7. In the continuation of Jacob's prayer to God (begun in verse 10), he says: *Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he come and strike me, mother with children* (verse 12).

218. **Esau transforms into Jacob's protector…** Sated with the goat (*sa'ir*) sent to the wilderness, the Accuser becomes the protector. His services not being desired, he is sent on his way by the people of Israel, finally withdrawing from them at *Ne'ilah*, the closing service of Yom Kippur, when the gates of repentance are closed and atonement is attained.

On the transformation of Esau, the demonic Accuser, into the Advocate or protector-guardian of Israel, see *Zohar* 2:60b; 3:63a, 63a (*Piq*; below, page 311), 63b, 102a, 123a (*RM*), 202b–203a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 126–27; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 17a.

See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:10: "To the wasp one says, 'Neither from your honey nor your sting!'" See also *Midrash Tehillim* 1:22; Rashi on Numbers 22:12.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1275, n. 346.

219. ***Jacob journeyed to Succoth…*** סכת (*Sukkot*) means "booths, sheds, shelters, huts." Here, Jacob's journey to

Succoth following his encounter with Esau signifies Israel as they enter their booths on the festival of *Sukkot*. In those booths they are protected by the shade of *Shekhinah*, following their deliverance from the Accuser on Yom Kippur.

On the Accuser's withdrawal with his gift or bribe, see *piqquda* forty-four, *Zohar* 3:63a–b (*Piq*; below, page 311). On the *sukkah*, see *piqquda* forty-five, *Zohar* 3:103b (*Piq*; below, page 313). On the verse from Genesis, see Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 17a.

220. **forty-third commandment…** On afflicting one's soul on Yom Kippur, see Leviticus 16:29, 31, 23:27, 32; Numbers 29:7.

On the five afflictions or deprivations, see M *Yoma* 8:1: "On Yom Kippur, eating, drinking, washing, anointing, putting on sandals, and sexual relations are forbidden." According to BT *Yoma* 76a, these six afflictions are actually five, since "drinking is included in the category of eating." In the Talmud (ibid.), Rav Ḥisda relates this list of five to the five times that the Torah commands one to afflict himself on Yom Kippur.

Here, the *Zohar* relates the five afflictions to the first five *sefirot* issuing from *Binah* (who is symbolized by Yom Kippur): *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret, Netsaḥ*-and-*Hod* (treated as one), and *Yesod*. These five together correspond to the fifty gates of *Binah* (see above, note 185). On these afflictions, see *Zohar* 2:185b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 25–26 (30); idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 167; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 17b.

On the affliction of body and soul, see *Zohar* 3:68b. Cf. *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1; BT *Sanhedrin* 91a–b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 4:5 on the joint guilt of body and soul.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 164; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shevitat Asor* 1:4–5; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 16.

221. **forty-fourth commandment…** On Yom Kippur a scapegoat bearing the sins of Israel is sent off into the

desert for the demon Azazel. (See Leviticus 16:7–22; similarly, in the Babylonian Akitu ritual, a goat—substituted for a human being—was offered to Ereshkigal, goddess of the Abyss.) According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46, the scapegoat of Yom Kippur is intended to preoccupy Satan: "They gave him a bribe on Yom Kippur so that he would not nullify Israel's sacrifice." According to the *Zohar*, the offering to Azazel prevents the Accuser (the Other Side) from denouncing Israel, thereby being empowered to perform his destructive work. His removal is crucial, for as *the end of all flesh*, he seeks the annihilation of all.

On this and the theme of assuaging demonic powers, see also *Sifra, Millu'im* (*Shemini*) 1:3, 43c; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 158–59; *Zohar* 1:11a, 64a–65a, 89b (*ST*), 113b–114b, 138b, 145b, 174b, 190a, 210b, 247b; 2:33a, 111b, 130a, 141a, 152b, 154b, 157a–b, 169a, 181b, 184b–185a, 203b, 227a–b, 237b–239b, 242b, 255b, 262b, 266b (last three *Heikh*), 269a, 271b (*Piq*); 3:44a (*Piq*), 60b, 63a–64a, 79b, 101b–102a, 202b–203a, 224a–b, 258b–259a; *ZḤ* 20c, 46c, 86b–c, 87b–c (last two *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 165–67; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 124–27; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:453–54, 3:890–95, 959.

On the transformation of the demonic Accuser into the Advocate or protector-guardian of Israel, see above, note 218.

The verse in Genesis reads: *God said to Noah, "End of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. Here, I am about to destroy them, with the earth!"* The *end of all flesh* is *before Me*, that is, in the presence of the King, seeking to prosecute, until he receives the bribe. Satan is called *end of all flesh* because he appears as the Angel of Death and consumes all mortal creatures. See BT *Bava Batra* 16a, in the name of

Resh Lakish: “Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same.”

On *end of all flesh*, see *Zohar* 1:35b, 54a, 58a, 62b, 106a, 107a, 148a (*ST*), 152b, 210b; 2:33a, 257b (*Heikh*), 268b, 269a.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 49; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim* 1–5. On this *piqquda*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:522–23.

222. **give him what befits him—שעיר (*sa’ir*), a goat…** The Other Side is given a goat—the perfect gift (or bribe) for hairy Esau, who symbolizes the demonic realm. Esau is distinctively *sa’ir*, *hairy*; and the same word also means “goat, demon, satyr.” (Further, Esau and his descendants inhabited the region called Seir; see Genesis 32:4; 36:8–9).

On Esau’s hairiness and its demonic associations, see Genesis 25:25; *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:15; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8; *Zohar* 1:65a, 138b, 145b, 153a; 3:64a, 70a, 232b. In rabbinic literature, Esau (or Edom) often represents the Roman Empire; and in medieval literature, he often represents Christian rule.

As the verse spoken by Jacob suggests, the Other Side and the side of holiness are very close: *my brother Esau*. Whereas the other side is hairy, the side of holiness is smooth. And on the side of holiness, the divine couple is *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*, who are mirrored on the Other Side by the demonic couple Samael and Lilith. See for example, *Zohar* 1:148a (*ST*); 2:242b–243a.

On the analogy of throwing a bone to a dog, see *Zohar* 2:111b, 152b; 3:197a; *ZḤ* 86b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 124, 126–27. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 155b. See also *ZḤ* 96b (*Tiq*).

223. **Ben Zoma was asked…** The *Zohar* quotes verbatim the question asked of, and reply given by, Ben Zoma in BT *Ḥagigah* 14b (see Rashi, ad loc.). The verse from Leviticus reads: *Anything with squashed or crushed or*

tom or cut testicles you shall not offer to YHVH*, and in your land you shall not do it*. Ben Zoma interprets the verse as prohibiting the castration of all creatures. The *Zohar* extends Ben Zoma's interpretation to include even demonic forces, since good and evil are required for the maintenance of the world.

On the prohibition against castrating any creature, see also *Sifra, Emor* 7:11, 99a; BT *Shabbat* 110b; *Zohar* 2:109a.

Cf. BT *Bava Batra* 74b, in the name of Rav: "Everything that the blessed Holy One created in His world, He created male and female. Even *Leviathan the elusive snake* and *Leviathan the writhing snake* He created male and female—and if they mated with one another, they would destroy the entire world. What did the blessed Holy One do? He castrated the male and killed the female, salting her for the righteous in the world to come."

On the demonic nature of the dog, see *Zohar* 1:242b; 2:65a, 121b, 163b; 3:25a, 32b, 155a, 211a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 313.

On the Angel of Death as *very good*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 9:10, in the name of Rabbi Shemu'el son of Yitsḥak: "*Behold, it was very good*—this is the Angel of Life; *And behold, it was very good*—this is the Angel of Death." See *Zohar* 1:14a, 47a, 144b; 2:68b, 103a, 149b, 163a, 249a, 264b (last two *Heikh*). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 9:5.

224. **wags his tail** Busy with his bone—the goat of sins that Israel has provided—the Accuser not only fails to accuse but also does not prevent Israel ("the one who enters") from attaining an audience with the King. Furthermore, the dog even "wags his tail," meaning that he praises Israel to God (see next paragraph). See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 126–27. According to *Matoq mi-Devash*, "the one who enters" refers to the celestial defender.

225. ***goat shall bear upon it all their iniquities…*** On the verses from Leviticus, see *Zohar* 3:63a, 64a, 102a.

226. **Everything rests upon this…** The sin-laden goat offered to Azazel is crucial, for without it judgment would be aroused and the Other Side would be empowered, and—since its nature is severe judgment—destruction would ensue. (Note that Israel are not innocent, and it is only by means of this ruse orchestrated by God that they avoid punishment.)

Like the *omer* offering (see above, pages 296–97), the goat to Azazel is a ruse—beneficial advice bestowed by God to outfox the demonic powers.

227. **forty-fifth commandment…** The biblical context (Leviticus 23:42–43) reads: *In booths you shall dwell seven days; all natives* [or: *citizens*] *in Israel shall dwell in booths, so that your generations may know that I made the Children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am YHVH your God*.

One who dwells in the *sukkah*, "booth," dwells in the "mystery of faith," signifying that he has entered the sefirotic realm through *Shekhinah*. Only the person rooted in "Israel" (signifying also celestial Israel, namely *Tif'eret Yisra'el*) can dwell in this *sukkah* (*Shekhinah*). With the Accuser thwarted, Israel can dwell securely in the flimsy *sukkah* and perform the commandment openly. See *Zohar* 3:103a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 180; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122 for close parallels.

Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, the *sukkah* is described as the "shade of faith," signifying *Shekhinah*. See 2:183b, 186b; 3:103a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 178, 180; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 17a. On the *sukkah* as shade, cf. the Talmudic term מטללתא (*matlalta*), "*sukkah*, cover," based on the root טלל (*tll*), "to provide shade." See BT *Sukkah* 14b, 28b–29a.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 168; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot*

Sukkah 6; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 16.

228. **forty-sixth commandment…** During the festival of *Sukkot*, Israel is commanded to offer a total of seventy bulls (see Numbers 29:12–32). According to the rabbinic interpretation, these offerings are for the benefit of the seventy nations of the world. Here, they nourish the celestial princes of the nations (see next note), who are described as "branches" that are attached to the cosmic trunk of Israel—namely *Tif'eret Yisra'el*, the core of the sefirotic body.

See BT *Sukkah* 55b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "To what do those seventy bullocks [that were offered during the seven days of *Sukkot*] correspond? To the seventy nations. To what does the single bullock [of the Eighth Day] correspond? To the unique nation." See also *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:23; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 28:9; *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pinḥas* 14–15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 21:24; *Zohar* 1:64a–b, 208b; 2:58b–59a, 135a, 185a, 186b–187a; 3:24b, 54b–55a (*Tos*), 96b–97a, 104b, 258b–259a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 177–78; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 127; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 204–5; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1251–53; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 244, n. 92.

On the imagery of the tree, see Daniel 4:7–9, 12; *Bahir* 64 (95), 67 (98). See especially *Zohar* 2:58b–59a. See also 2:5b (*MhN*), 62b, 64b.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 50; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Temidin u-Musafin* 10:3–4.

229. **that all will be their friends…** The sacrifices of *Sukkot* serve to promote celestial good-will. When the celestial princes of the nations are favorably disposed toward Israel, so are the nations that they represent.

According to rabbinic tradition, the seventy nations of the world are governed by seventy angels or heavenly "princes" appointed by God. See Daniel 10:13, 20–21;

Septuagint, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; Jubilees 15:31–32; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 11:8, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 8; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis 9:19; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 24; *Zohar* 1:46b, 61a, 108b, 113a (*MhN*), 149b, 177a; 2:5b, 14b, 17a (last three *MhN*), 96a, 126b, 209a–b, 232b; 3:8a, 298b; *ZḤ* 23d, 24c, 28c (all *MhN*); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:204–5, n. 91.

On the verse from Proverbs, cf. *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:1; *Zohar* 1:144b.

230. **They used to offer the sacrifice to them...** Heaven forbid that one should think that those offerings were made to the celestial princes! All the offerings were to God—who then distributed the bounty.

231. **forty-seventh commandment...** Following Israel's vindication and acquittal on Yom Kippur, the blessed Holy One takes them as His own, showering them with His shade on *Sukkot*. Correspondingly, Israel also "take" the blessed Holy One during the festival of *Sukkot*, by taking hold of the four species—which symbolize the *sefirot*, the mystery of *Adam*, the human above.

Leviticus 23:40 describes four species of vegetation that are held on *Sukkot*: *You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit of a majestic tree, fronds of palms, and a branch of a thickly-leaved tree* [or: *branches of thickly-leaved trees*] *and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before YHVH your God seven days*. These four species became identified as the *etrog* (citron), *lulav* (palm branch), *hadas* (sprigs of myrtle), and *aravah* (willow twigs). See *Sifra, Emor* 16:4, 6–7, 102c–d; JT *Sukkah* 3:5, 53d; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:8, 15; BT *Sukkah* 34b–35a; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 29.

On the kabbalistic significance of the four species, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1249–51. The *etrog* signifies *Malkhut*; the palm, *Yesod*; the three sprigs of myrtle, *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*; and the two willow twigs stand for *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. See *Zohar* 1:63b–64a, 220a–221a (standard

editions); 2:186b; 3:24a–b, 31b, 104a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 185; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 127–28; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 213–17.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:9, where "this is the blessed Holy One" is said of each of the four species, meaning that each of the species points to a divine attribute. According to Rabbi Mani in *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:14, the four species signify the human being: the palm branch corresponds with the spine, the myrtle with the eyes, the willow with the mouth, and the citron with the heart. See also *Tanḥuma, Emor* 19. The *Zohar* connects both ideas by claiming that the four species signify the sefirotic human being. On the sefirotic configuration(s) known as Adam or Primordial Adam, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:295–98.

See Maimonides, *Sefer ha-Mitsvot*, positive commandment no. 169; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Lulav* 7; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 16.

1. ***you shall behold…*** This section, commonly called *Raza de-Razin*, treats the topics of physiognomy (determining temperament, character, and fate from physical appearance), metoposcopy (determination based specifically on lines, marks, and other features of the forehead), and chiromancy (determination based specifically on lines and other marks in the palm and fingers). The title likely derives from the medieval pseudepigraphic book *Secretum secretorum*, attributed to Aristotle, which includes a section on physiognomy. This section extends from 2:70a until 75a and then continues in *ZḤ* 35b–37c. Other sections on physiognomy appear in *Zohar* 2:70b–78a (in columns parallel to *Raza de-Razin*), 272a–276a (*Tosafot*; identical with the passage in *ZḤ*); *TZ* 70, 121a–138b.

Secretum secretorum is written in the form of a treatise for Aristotle's most famous pupil, Alexander the Great, and it covers a wide range of topics including statecraft, ethics, medicine, physiognomy, astrology, alchemy, and magic. It was translated from Arabic (*Kitab Sirr al-asrar*) into Latin in the twelfth century and became one of the most widely read texts of the Middle Ages, being considered a genuine work of Aristotle's. A medieval Hebrew version entitled *Sod ha-Sodot* was edited by Moses Gaster in his *Studies and Texts in Folk-Lore*, 3:247–78 (section on physiognomy: 268–72); his English translation appears in 2:762–813 (section on physiognomy: 799–803). For an English translation from the Arabic, see Robert Steele, ed., *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 176–266 (section on physiognomy: 219–24). See Williams, "The Secret of Secrets"; Spitzer, "The Hebrew Translations of the *Sod ha-Sodot*."

Both here and in the main body of the *Zohar* (as well as *TZ*), the material on physiognomy is linked with Jethro's advice to Moses on how to administer justice: *As for you*, תחזה (*teḥezeh*), *you shall behold* [or: *perceive, discern, select*], *from all the people men of caliber, God-fearing men,*

truthful men, hating bribery, and you shall set chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, and chiefs of tens over them. And they shall judge the people at all times, and so, every great matter they shall bring to you, and every small matter they themselves shall judge, and it will be lighter on you and they will bear it with you (Exodus 18:21–22).

Rabbinic tradition queries the use of the unusual term תחזה (*teḥezeh*), *you shall behold*, rather than *you shall see* or simply *you shall select*. See *Sekhel Tov* on the verse: "Since it could have said *you shall see*, but said *you shall behold*, one learns that it signifies prophecy. This is similar to חזון (*ḥazon*), *The vision of, Isaiah the son of Amoz that he* חזה (*ḥazah*), *saw* (Isaiah 1:1)." See *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 18:21. Here, the word *teḥezeh, you shall behold*, is understood as implying that these judges should be selected based on principles of physiognomy. See *Zohar* 2:78a; *ZḤ* 31a; *TZ* 70, 121b–122b, 123b, 124b, 126b, 138a; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 18:21.

2. ***Human Features…*** Literally, *the generations of Adam*. In this context the word תולדות (*toledot*), *generations* (*of*), implies marks "generated" on a person, as well as "human nature, character." The passage in Genesis (5:1–2) is cited elsewhere as a biblical indication of physiognomy. Since the human being is created *in the image of God*, every physical feature conveys profound meaning. Techniques of physiognomy were employed already by the Merkavah mystics to ascertain whether a potential initiate was fit to receive esoteric teachings.

The understanding of the face's transparency rests on the prevalent medieval belief in the science of physiognomy, the explanatory framework for describing and predicting psychological, social, and moral conditions on the basis of facial features. It is based on the deep-seated human belief that there is a relationship between a person's physical

features and his or her character; examples of this kind of science persisted even through the twentieth century.

In this text it remains unclear whether the ethical traits and behaviors associated with the various physical features are prognostic, or if they are merely additional details of a clinical examination, which then are to be used for prognostication. This translation has assumed the former possibility; see below, at the end of note 17.

On physiognomy (and the related sciences of chiromancy and metoposcopy), see Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, 97–99; Lewin, *Otsar ha-Geonim, Ḥagigah* 11b; Donnolo, *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, 64c–d (note); Halevi, *Sefer ha-Kuzari* 3:65; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot) 162; Naḥmanides on Genesis 5:2; idem, "Torat ha-Shem Temimah," in *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:161–63; idem, *Milḥemet ha-Shem* on Alfasi on *Berakhot*, 44a (pagination of Alfasi); *Zohar* 1:55b, 96b; 2:70b–78a, 74b (*Mat*), 122b; 3:6a, 45b–47a; 75b–76a, 129a (*IR*), 157a; *ZḤ* 31a–35b (*TZ*), 35b–37c; *TZ* 70, 121a–138b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 262; Vital, *Sha'ar Ru'aḥ ha-Qodesh*, 15–22; Scholem, "Cheiromancy in the Zohar"; idem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 246–305; idem, "Ein Fragment zur Physiognomik"; idem, *Kabbalah*, 317–19; *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 9; Licht, "Shoqayim Siman li-Vḥirah"; Allegro, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, 90–91; Gruenwald, "Qeta'im Ḥadashim mi-Sifrut Hakkarat Panim"; idem, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 218–24; Fine, "The Art of Metoposcopy"; idem, *Physician of the Soul*, 153–64; Schäfer, *Hekhalot-Studien*, 84–95; idem, *The Hidden and Manifest God*, 137–38; Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, 95–100; Ruderman, *Kabbalah, Magic, and Science*, 132–35; Alexander, "Physiognomy, Initiation, and Rank in the Qumran Community"; Liebes, *Alilot Elohim*, 177–207; Margolin, "Ḥokhmat ha-Partsuf ve-Sirtutei Kaf ha-Yad." See also Vol. 4, pp. 392–93, n. 76. Cf. JT *Yevamot* 16:3, 15c; BT *Yevamot* 120a; Rashi, Radak on Isaiah 3:9; Naḥman

of Bratslav, *Liqqutei Moharan*, 2:72. On the term *toladah*, see Klatzkin, *Otsar ha-Munaḥim ha-Filosofiyyim* 2:9, 4:182.

On *toledot, generations* (*of*), as implying marks "generated" on a person, see *Zohar* 2:70b (*RR*), 78a. On *toledot* as implying "human nature, character," see Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 272–77.

On the expansive title, see *Or Yaqar*: "The significance of the title is that people thought that physiognomy is generic magical lore, but that is not the case. For it is a wondrous wisdom that is dependent upon heavenly attributes, treating the creation of the soul through supernal, wondrous limbs, and the roots of souls from the celestial *sefirot*. From there derives knowledge of the causes of facial changes as will be explained. Herein are marvelous secrets of our Torah…. This is why it specifies 'holy Torah'—to indicate that alien entities have no share in it that would enable it to concern magic (God forbid)."

3. **I raised my hands in prayer…** Rabbi Shim'on invokes the Divinity as he prepares to describe the primal origins of emanation. The formula "raised my hands in prayer" derives from *Targum Onqelos* on Genesis 14:22: "I raise my hand in prayer before *YHVH*."

See *Zohar* 1:65a; 2:9a, 67a, 268b (*Heikh*); 3:195b, 258b, 287a. Cf. *Or Yaqar*; *Or ha-Ḥammah*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. The "ancient book" signifies the *Book of the Generations of Adam*. See next note.

The Book of King Solomon is one of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the authors of the *Zohar*. For other references to this book, see *Zohar* 1:7b, 13b, 225b; 2:67a, 125a, 139a, 172a, 204b; 3:10b, 65b, 70b, 78b, 104a, 151b, 164a, 193b, 263b (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 12b (*MhN*). Naḥmanides several times refers to, and quotes from, an Aramaic version of the Apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon*. See the introduction to his *Commentary on the Torah*, 5–6; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:163, 182. On the numerous scientific and magical books attributed to King Solomon,

see Charlesworth, ed., *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:956–57.

See the comment by Shim’on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a: “All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*… have been lost on account of our numerous sins in the wanderings of exile, and nothing remains of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*.” For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma’lah*.

“Hidden Book” renders ספרא גניזא (*sifra geniza*). On the use of the root גנז (*gnz*) in relation to the writing of esoteric lore, see Liebes, *Torat ha-Yetsirah shel Sefer Yetsirah*, 128–29.

The rest of *Raza de-Razin* proceeds without further reference to Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai or any other speaker, but this translation presumes that Rabbi Shim’on is the speaker throughout.

4. ***This…*** The masculine demonstrative term זה (*zeh*), *this*, refers to the Tree of Life, which signifies *Tif’eret*—through which everything is prepared to flow down into the world. The verse in Exodus reads in full: *This month is for you head of months; it is the first for you of the months of the year*. A teaching in BT *Berakhot* 10b instructs that the demonstrative *this* is also exclusive, indicating that calendric intercalation cannot occur during Nisan—only one month can be Nisan (unlike Adar, which is the chosen month for intercalation). Rabbi Shim’on extends that teaching here, to say that other books about physiognomy have been written, but only this one is authentic.

5. ***This is the book…*** Traditional commentaries identify the book with *Yesod*, the conduit for human souls streaming into the world, but it is also a vessel of physiognomic lore and a speculum for viewing the entirety of humanity. This mirror-like instrument was first viewed by Adam and then conveyed to King Solomon.

See BT *Avodah Zarah* 5a: “Did not Resh Lakish say: ‘What is the meaning of the verse *This is the book of the generations of Adam*… (Genesis 5:1)? Did Adam possess a

book? Rather, this teaches that the blessed Holy One showed Adam every generation with its expounders, every generation with its sages, every generation with its leaders.'"

The *Zohar*'s Book of Adam is not to be confused with the *Book of Adam* in the Apocrypha. According to various medieval traditions, the angel Raziel transmitted a magical book to Adam. Later, probably in the seventeenth century, *Sefer Razi'el* (the Book of Raziel) was compiled in its present form, comprising ancient magical, mystical, and cosmological teachings.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 24:2 (and parallels discussed in Theodor's note); *Seder Olam Rabbah* 30; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; BT *Bava Metsi'a* 85b–86a, *Sanhedrin* 38b; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 12; *Shemot Rabbah* 40:3; *Bereshit Rabbati* 5:5; *Zohar* 1:17b, 37a–b, 55a–b, 58b, 72b, 90b, 227b; 2:70a–b, 70a–b (*RR*), 77a, 131a, 143b, 180a, 181a, 197a; 3:10a, 68b; *ZḤ* 5c (*SO*), 16d (*MhN*), 37b (*RR*), 67c–d, 69a (last two *ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 68 (85); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 383; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:117–18, n. 110; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 85–87.

On the all-inclusive nature of the human image, see *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 44a (*Heikh*), 71b; 2:73a (*RR*), 74a, 80b, 178a (*SdTs*), 211b; 3:48a–b, 60b, 135a, 141a–b (last two *IR*), 240b; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 50–51, 53–54. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:1; Vol. 7, p. 303, n. 153.

6. **Moses was perplexed...** Moses fully attains the rank of *Tif'eret*, gaining visionary skill, when he unites with *Shekhinah*. This union is signified by the word ואתה (*ve-attah*), *and you*. The prefix *ve* (*and*) seems superfluous. However, it too alludes to the divine union: the letter ו (*vav*) symbolizes *Tif'eret*, while *attah* (*you*) indicates *Shekhinah*, who as the Divine Presence can be addressed directly.

On *attah* and *ve-attah*, see *Zohar* 1:15b, 37a, 154b, 158b, 169a, 205b; 2:23b, 104a, 138b, 140a, 158b (*RM*), 179b,

221a, 261a (*Heikh*); 3:199a; *Or Yaqar*. Cf. 1:198a; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On Moses' being confounded, see BT *Menaḥot* 29a: "It was taught in the school of Rabbi Yishma'el: Three things were too difficult for Moses until the blessed Holy One showed him with His finger, namely [how to construct] the lamp stand [in the Dwelling], [how to recognize precisely] the new moon, and [how to determine which] creeping things [are pure and impure]." See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; *Sifrei*, Numbers 61; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:14; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 8; *Beha'alotekha* 3, 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 11; *Beha'alotekha* 4, 11; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:4, 10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 78a; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:28; *Zohar* 2:140b, 157b–158a (*RM*), 221a, 241a. On the esoteric nature of physiognomy, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 5:2. Cf. *Zohar* 2:78a, where it says that Moses was able to select *capable men* instantly through divine inspiration.

On looking at sixty myriads, see Naḥmanides, "Torat ha-Shem Temimah," 161: "Rabbi Yishma'el is the one who received these secrets…. This lore is alluded to in… tractate *Berakhot* [58a, quoting *Tosefta Berakhot* 6:2], 'One who sees multitudes [that is, six hundred thousand members] of Israel recites: "Blessed [are You, *YHVH*,…] who knows all secrets," for neither their features nor their opinions are identical.'"

7. **Six characteristics…** Rabbi Shim'on reveals that the six critical facial features are alluded to in Exodus 18:21.

In a talmudic discussion (BT *Niddah* 23b) of whether an animal may be eaten if a human face is found within its bowels, Rabbi Yoḥanan contends that the following are the essential human facial features that must be present to determine that it was indeed a human that had been consumed: "The forehead, the eyebrows, the eyes, the cheeks, and the chin…." See also *Zohar* 2:78a. Cf. JT *Yevamot* 16:3, 15c; BT *Yevamot* 120a; *Zohar* 2:70b, where

seven features are specified, adding the ears; and *ZḤ* 31a (*RR*) and *TZ* 70, 121b, which have different lists of six features.

For a chiromantic interpretation of gazing at the hands during the *Havdalah* rite that marks the end of Sabbath, see *Sha'arei Teshuvah* (*Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim*), 104; *Kol Bo*, 41.

8. **hair...** Namely, eyebrows. On the physiognomy of the eyebrows, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:269 (English translation: 2:800–801); *Zohar* 2:72b–73a; *ZḤ* 35b (*RR*); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, p. 18 (English translation: 54); Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1, 45a.

9. **eyes...** On the physiognomy of the eyes, see *Seder Eliyahu Rabbah* 29, p. 162; *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:268–69 (English translation: 2:799–800); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, p. 18 (English translation: 54); Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 27a–28a; *Zohar* 2:72b–73b, 72b–75a (*RR*); *ZḤ* 35b–37a (*RR*); *Or Yaqar*; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1, 45a–46b; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 278. On the physiognomy of the eyelids, see BT *Qiddushin* 31a.

10. **face...** On the physiognomy of the face, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:270 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, pp. 17–18 (English translation: 54); *Zohar* 2:73b–75b, 74a (*RR*); 3:123a (*RM*); *ZḤ* 72a–b (*ShS*); Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1, 49a; *Or Yaqar*. Cf. Wisdom of Ben Sira 19:29; *Bereshit Rabbah* 73:12; *Zohar* 1:96b; 3:6a, 76a, 157a; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 298–99. On facial glow, see BT *Ketubbot* 103b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A 25; Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, pp. 17–18 (English translation: 54); Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 282–83. *Or Yaqar* notes that the phrases *God-fearing men* and *truthful men* are not interpreted in this brief treatment, and he supplies physiognomic material regarding the nose, lips, tongue, and beard.

The formulation “to stand poised in the palace of the King” derives from Daniel 1:3–4: *Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief officer, to bring some Israelites of royal descent and of the nobility—youths without blemish, handsome in appearance, proficient in all wisdom, erudite in knowledge, discerning in thought, and capable of standing poised in the palace of the king—and teach them the writings and the language of the Chaldeans*.

11. **hands…** Bribes are taken in hand.

On chiromancy (determining temperament, character, and fate from lines and other marks in the palm and fingers), see C. J. Jung, “Introduction,” in Spier, *The Hands of Children*, xv–xvi: “The totality-conception of modern biology, which is based on the evidence of a host of observations and research, does not exclude the possibility that *hands*, whose shape and functioning are so intimately connected with the psyche, might provide revealing and, therefore, interpretable expressions of psychical peculiarity, that is, of the human character. Modern science increasingly relinquishes the medieval conception of the separateness of body and mind, and just as the body in the view of science is neither something mechanical nor chemical, so the mind seems to be but another aspect of the living body. Conclusions relating to one or the other would therefore seem to be within the range of scientific operation.”

See *Zohar* 2:76a–78a; *TZ* 70, 132b–133b; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 317–19; above, notes 1–2.

12. **alluded to here…** Namely, in Exodus 18:21, and not in other books that people might find. See *Zohar* 2:78a. The “truly righteous” are the kabbalists. See *Zohar* 2:73b, where those knowing physiognomic wisdom are called “masters of inner wisdom.” Both of these terms emphasize the spiritual, rather than merely mechanical, nature of this occult science.

13. ***skin and flesh…*** Implying that the essential human being is distinct from *skin and flesh*. Just as the human soul is clothed in flesh, sinews, and bones, so do the lower *sefirot* clothe the most recondite *sefirot*.

"Rungs of man" renders דרגין דבר נש (*dargin de-var nash*). Although *bar nash* could be construed to mean "human being" or "person," in the *Zohar* it almost invariably refers to a "man." Furthermore, all the exempla examined below concern men, and not women.

See *Zohar* 1:20b; 2:75b–76a; *ZḤ* 78c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 44, 159; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 28–30 (33–36); *Or Yaqar*; *Or ha-Ḥammah*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:680; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The verse in Job concludes: *wove me of bones and sinews*.

14. **End of All Flesh…** *Sitra Aḥra* is called *End of All Flesh*, based on a personified reference in Genesis 6:13: *God said to Noah, "End of all flesh has come before Me…."* Various angels are nourished by the fragrance and the meat of the sacrificial offerings (or by the flesh of human beings after death), and are signified by *flesh*. *Skin* symbolizes the supernal membrane that arches over all the firmaments and angelic creatures.

On the imagery here, see *Zohar* 2:75b–76a; 3:170a; Moses de León, "She'elot u-Tshuvot," 58. By providing a portion to the Other Side, one ensures that the demonic force will be occupied, assuaged, and deterred from interfering in the realm of holiness. On this theme, see *Sifra, Shemini, Millu'im* 1:3, 43c; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 158–59; *Zohar* 1:11a, 64a–65a, 89b (*ST*), 113b–114b, 138b, 145b, 174b, 190a, 210b, 247b; 2:33a, 111b, 130a, 141a, 152b, 154b, 157a–b, 169a, 181b, 184b–185a, 203b, 227a–b, 237b–239b, 242b, 266b, 269a (last two *Heikh*); 3:63a–b (*Piq*), 101b–102a, 202b–203a, 224a–b, 258b–259a; *ZḤ* 20c, 46c, 67b (*MhN, ShS*), 86c,

87b–c (last two *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 165–67; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 124–27; idem, "She'elot u-Tshuvot," 49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:453–54, 3:890–95, 959.

15. **depending on one's deeds…** Great wisdom can be learned from the stars and constellations, but even they shift their positions. So, too, people have the ability to change their habits, and transform their appearance, regardless of astrological predictions. This remarkable assertion—that through repentance one can change one's physical features—distinguishes the *Zohar*'s approach to physiognomy from other similar texts in which one's physical appearance is determinative of one's nature.

See BT *Shabbat* 156a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "How do we know that Israel is immune from astrological influence [literally: "that there is no astrological influence upon Israel"]? Because it is said: *Thus says YHVH: Do not learn the way of the nations, and by signs in the heavens do not be dismayed; for the nations are dismayed by them* (Jeremiah 10:2)—the nations are dismayed, not Israel." Much of that Talmudic folio discusses the validity of astrology. See *Tosefta Sukkah* 2:6; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 44:12; *Eliyahu Zuta* 16.

On astrology in Kabbalah, see Kiener, "The Status of Astrology"; Daphne Freedman, "Astral and Other Neologisms in the *Zohar*." On people's changing features, see *Zohar* 2:78a. On the distinctiveness of the *Zohar*'s approach, see Liebes, "Hakkarat Panim be-Qabbalah," 179–84; Margolin, "Ḥokhmat ha-Partsuf ve-Sirtutei Kaf ha-Yad," 209–27. It is possible that this unique approach is a framing device added in at a late stage of redaction.

16. ***This is the book…*** One's face is like a book; one's features, like a text's inscriptions, reflecting essential righteousness or sinfulness. Since one's facial appearance changes over time, it serves as a veritable gauge of one's

inner purity. Only the lines on one's face shift over time, while basic features remain constant in their appearance.

On the various meanings of *toledot*, literally *generations* (*of*), see above, note 2.

17. **ז-ר-ה פ-ס-ץ (*Zayin, Resh, He, Pe, Samekh*, [final] *Tsadi*)...** The first five of these letters derive from the words זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *This is the Book*, from Genesis 5:1. The letter *zayin* signifies the word *zayin*, "weapon," and thus associating hair with the letter *zayin* implies an allusion to physical might. This linkage can be found in the story of Samson, for it was Delilah clipping his locks that led to his loss of power. See Judges 16:17: *No razor has touched my head, for I have been a Nazirite of God from my mother's womb. Were I shaven, my power would leave me and I would be weakened and become like any man*. Paradoxically, the hair of the Nazirite signifies the divine attribute of *Ḥesed*, never ceasing as it flows downward. The letter *tsadi* is often interpreted as alluding to *tsaddiq*, righteous one, signifying *Yesod*, who completes the procession of divine blessing into the world. While lines on the face may change as a result of one's behavior, the nature of one's hair remains fixed. The letter *samekh* follows the letter *nun*, last letter of the spelled-out form *zayin*.

"For the crown of his God is upon him" is an Aramaic rendering of Numbers 6:7, from the biblical passage describing the Nazirite.

Nowhere in *Raza de-Razin* is there an explanation of the concept of a person's being "in" a particular letter, but it is expounded in sixteenth-century Kabbalah. See Abraham Azulai, *Ḥesed le-Avraham*, 4:6: "Know that there is no body or *nefesh, ruaḥ*, or *neshamah* that was not created by means of the twenty-two letters of the Torah.... They exist within, and a person's skin covers over them like the screen of the firmament. Indeed the *nefesh* of the righteous one has the facility to shine, passing through that screen, causing the soul's letters to protrude outward. But the wicked

person does not have outwardly recognizable letters, because the husks shroud his *nefesh* and it does not shine. This is the mystery of letters that are revealed in the skin of the human forehead—deriving from the inner letters, revealing all of a person's transgressions upon the forehead."

On the mnemonic, cf. *Zohar* 2:77a–b; *ZḤ* 37b (*RR*): פ-ס-ץ ז-ר-ה (*zayin, resh, he, pe, samekh*, final *tsadi*). On the physiognomy of hair, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:269 (English translation: 2:800); Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 26d; *Zohar* 2:70b–71a, 74b (*RR*); 3:49a, 127b, 128b–129b, 131b–132a (last two *IR*); *ZḤ* 35b–c, 36a, 36c–d, 37a (all *RR*); Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1, 42a–b; *Or Yaqar*; *Or ha-Ḥammah* 2:84d–85a. Cf. Vol. 3, p. 308, n. 31. On the hair of the Nazirite (usually identified in Zoharic kabbalah with *Keter*), see *Zohar* 3:48b, 127b; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Tsedeq*, 28b, 35a; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 105–6. Cf. Vol. 7, 306, n. 163. On the association of *tsadi* with *tsaddiq*, see JT *Megillah* 1:8, 71d; BT *Shabbat* 104a; *Midrash Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva*, Ver. 2, 398, 413; "*Midrash ha-Otiyyot,*" 464; "*Midrash Alpha-Beitot*" (in *Batei Midrashot* 2:442–52); *Midrash Alfa-Beta de-Rabbi Akiva*, ver. B (according to Krakow and Amsterdam MSS), in *Beit ha-Midrash* 3:57; Jacob ha-Kohen, "Peirush ha-Otiyyot," 217–18; *ZḤ* 67b (*ShS*); Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi, "Peirush al ha-Alef-Bet," 28. On the emergence of *samekh*, see *Zohar* 2:72a; *Or Yaqar*; *Or ha-Ḥammah*.

For sefirotic interpretations of physiognomic details throughout *Raza de-Razin*, see *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. Most of *Raza de-Razin* does not include typical kabbalistic references, but there are passages in the *Zohar*'s treatment of physiognomy that depart from the purely clinical approaches of the medieval source material. See Liebes, "Hakkarat Panim be-Qabbalah," 179–84.

Most of the remainder of this chapter is organized with a fairly consistent information structure. The following

elements prototypically appear in this order: *diagnostic signs* (observable physical features); *diagnosis* (in terms of certain Hebrew letters); and *prognosis* (or "prophecy"; behavioral traits and destiny). There is some inconsistency to this scheme, and there are also some sections that may be either sub-entries to the previous case or independent cases under consideration.

18. **Hair hanging…** While *Raza de-Razin* opens with explanations of the theory of physiognomy, most of the cases that follow are highly detailed lists of particular cases, written in a clinical tone, often simply listing particular features. Conclusions are drawn about the relationship between features and character in a prognostic way, even though each case is arguably unique.

Here the man responds stridently to words of rebuke.

On the physiognomy of the eyebrows, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:269 (English translation: 2:800–801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, p. 18 (English translation: 54); *Zohar* 2:72b–73a, 76b; *ZḤ* 35b (*RR*); Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1, 45a.

19. **eyebrows are separated…** On being quick to anger and quickly appeased, see M *Avot* 5:11. On metoposcopy (the physiognomy of the forehead), see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:270 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, p. 18 (English translation: 54); *Zohar* 2:71b–73a; *ZḤ* 35b–36a, 36c–37b (both *RR*). On his collecting or paying these forms of tax, see Or *Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

20. **He is stingy** On stinginess, cf. *Zohar* 2:77b; *ZḤ* 35b (*RR*).

21. **He bows his head…** Although bowing is usually a sign of humility, here it is a sign of sadness. "His right is his left" indicates that he is left-handed.

22. **Quick to anger…** On being "quick to anger, and quick to be appeased," see M *Avot* 5:11; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*).

“Crinkles” renders קמיטין (*qemitin*); alternatively, “folds, creases.”

23. **When he returns to his Lord…** A righteous and repentant man, others turn to him and depend upon him because God favors the righteous. His stature rises and falls, depending upon whether *samekh* or *tsadi* is in ascendance. Apparently, the mark on his arm bears facial features, and its lack of hair may indicate an absence of judgment.

24. **He is in the letter *zayin*…** Abiding in the letter *zayin* may signify rash or aggressive behavior, as the word *zayin* means “weapon.” This person rarely attains righteousness, symbolized by the letter *tsadi*. The letter *samekh* may be related to the root סמך (*smkh*), “support,” which could be a reference to the *sefirah Yesod*, or simply to being unrooted.

“Curly” renders קמיטא (*qemita*), more literally “constricted, contracted, shrunk.” In the section on physiognomy in *Zohar* on *Yitro*, curly hair is associated with anger. See *Zohar* 2:70b. On *zayin* and *tsadi*, see above, note 17. “Greed” renders חמידו (*ḥamidu*), referring to his excessive desires.

25. **His head bowed…** Many of this person’s features illustrate his deceptiveness. A bowed head usually signals humility, but not here. “Madness” suggests anxiety or lack of repose.

“Scrunches” renders אקמיט (*aqmit*). See previous note. On madness, see *Zohar* 2:72a, 73a, 75b. On the physiognomy of the ears, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:270 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha’ashu’im* 2, p. 19 (English translation: 54); Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha’ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 29a; *Zohar* 2:75b; *TZ* 70, 130a; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1, 46b–47b.

26. **but not a deceiver…** As a person ages, the significance of his features changes. *Or Yaqar* and *Matoq mi-Devash* punctuate the sentence differently, yielding the

opposite meaning: “he is deceitful, not restraining himself from that path.”

On deceit, see *Zohar* 2:71a–b, 72b, 73b.

27. **the letter *zayin*…** The lack of variety or nuance in the assignment of letters makes interpretation, in most cases, dubious. The physiognomic material on the pages facing *Raza de-Razin* provides more detail allowing for speculation on the meanings of these letters.

“Eyebrow” renders קריצא (*qeritsa*) in this distinctive use of the term that, in rabbinic literature, denotes some form of gesticulation.

28. **three large ones and three short ones…** Cf. *ZḤ* 35d–36a (*RR*).

29. **forehead is interpreted by hair…** These different facial features are elucidated in light of each other.

30. **lines… are constantly changing…** Most facial features (such as hair color, eye color, shape of the nose, etc.) remain constant, but the lines on one’s forehead continually change during one’s lifetime, fluctuating in response to one’s actions. These lines are useful for physiognomy, however, only from the onset of spiritual maturity at age thirteen.

According to rabbinic tradition, the evil impulse attempts to seduce a person from the moment of birth, whereas the good impulse enters only at age thirteen. Further, according to rabbinic law it is at the age of thirteen (for a boy) that one is obligated to perform commandments; in the *Zohar* it also marks the attainment of a certain maturation of soul.

On the soul entering at age thirteen, see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16; *Zohar* 1:78a–79b (*ST*); 2:33b, 98a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:762–63. On the significance of the age thirteen, see *Zohar* 1:179a–b; 2:248b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 15d (*MhN*). On the changes in facial features as consequences of one’s moral and religious stature, see above, notes 15–16.

31. ***Moses chose men of caliber…*** In Exodus 18:21, Jethro recommends to Moses *And you, you shall behold* [or: *perceive, discern, select*], *from all the people men of caliber, God-fearing men, truthful men, hating bribery*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on explains that Moses had attempted to use these ethical criteria as means of selection but was unsuccessful, relying instead on physiognomic principles. Consequently, in ibid., 25, it says only that Moses *chose men of caliber*. Similarly, in Deuteronomy 1:13 God commands *Get you wise and understanding and knowledgeable men*, whereas in Deuteronomy 1:15, Moses says *I took the heads of your tribes, wise and knowledgeable men* (ibid., 15), omitting the word *understanding*. In both cases, Moses apparently is unable to use natural means to find *men of caliber*.

See BT *Eruvin* 100b; *Midrash Otiyyot de-Rabbi Akiva*, 358; *Zohar* 2:201a. Cf. *Zohar* 2:70a (*RR*), 78a, in which the selection was made either by *Shekhinah* or by Moses through direct aid of divine inspiration.

Deuteronomy 1:13 reads in full: *Get you wise and understanding and knowledgeable men for your tribes, and I will set them as your heads*.

32. **Eyes…** Here begins the discussion of the physiognomy of eyes. Though white eyebrows might have been thought to indicate mercy, the red hair of the head is more telling, signifying judgment. The gap between these two markers (eyebrows and hair) reveals the craftiness of this person's character. In his duplicity he convinces others of his sincerity.

"Sunken" means sunken in their sockets. On the physiognomy of the eyes, see above, note 9. On "sunken eyes," see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:269 (English translation: 2:800); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, p. 18 (English translation: 54); *Zohar* 2:72b; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1, 46b; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

33. **he is a lecher** “Lecher” renders חמדן (*ḥamdan*), referring to a person of excessive desires. See above, note 24.

L23, Cr, and *Or Yaqar* all read “abundant seed on his arms,” rather than “abundant hair….”

34. **Seed of David…** Ruddiness evokes concern that someone will be like Esau, who was also noted for his red hair and is associated with cruelty in rabbinic interpretation. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:8, in the name of Rabbi Abba son of Kahana: “When Samuel saw that David was ruddy, as is written, *And he sent, and brought him. Now he was ruddy* (1 Samuel 16:12), he was frightened, saying, ‘Perhaps this one, too, is a murderer.’ But the blessed Holy One reassured him: *with fine eyes* (ibid.)—Esau slays on his own accord, whereas he [David] would kill only with the opinion of the court.”

In 1 Samuel 16:12, David is described as *ruddy, with fine eyes and goodly to look on*, and these descriptors elicit creative interpretation. The redness in his eyes is a barometer of divine judgment during battle, and when that color abates, his eyes are a subject of fascination. The three colors may be white, red, and green, signifying *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret* respectively.

“Yellow” renders ירוקא (*yaroqa*), a term that can signify “green, yellow, yellow-green, pale.” The yellow in the eye may refer to one of various pathologies: liver disease; pinguecula; lipid deposits; iris nevus or other benign lesions; or simply the visibility of the medial rectus tendons at the side of the eyeball.

On “the seed of David,” and on his ruddy appearance, see *Zohar* 2:74a; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 286, and n. 143. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 23:5. On David’s ruddiness, cf. *Zohar* 3:51a, 56a, 206b; *ZḤ* 32b (*TZ*).

On the beauty of David’s eyes, see *Zohar* 3:206b; *ZḤ* 32b (*TZ*). On the delight of looking upon David, see 1 Samuel 16:7; *Zohar* 2:74a–75a; Vol. 4, pp. 401–2, n. 113.

On the two different responses to King David, cf. *ZḤ* 78b–79a (*MhN, Rut*).

On *yaroqa*, see M *Sotah* 3:4; *Eduyyot* 5:6; *Niddah* 2:6; BT *Berakhot* 59a, *Shabbat* 134a, *Pesaḥim* 30b, *Megillah* 13a, *Ketubbot* 107b, *Avodah Zarah* 33b; Brenner, *Biblical Colour Terms*, 124, 164, 183; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, s.v. *yaroq*. On ocular pathologies involving yellowing, see Yanoff and Sassani, *Ocular Pathology*, 235, 237–38, 697–702. Cf. *ZḤ* 89c (*MhN, Rut*).

35. **some ascending, some descending…** As a sign of David's perfection, all the letters of the alphabet could be seen on his forehead, but in accord with his fluctuating moods, not all of them could be seen at once.

On metoposcopy (physiognomy of the forehead), see above, note 19.

36. **neither black nor red…** Spiritually, King David occupies a position between hard and soft judgment. Eyebrows that are neither black nor red, eyes featuring both red and delight, and people's differing reactions to his eyes all reflect this bivalence. Alternatively, David tricks the wicked with his eyes—first appearing inviting and then punishing. As a manifestation of human perfection, David contains all countenances within his eyes and within his face. Normally, doves are interpreted as symbols of peace, but here Rabbi Shim'on interprets the word יונה (*yonah*), "dove," as if it were based on the verbal root ינה (*ynh*), "to oppress, cheat, deceive, defraud."

On this interpretation of *yonah*, cf. *Zohar* 2:199a. On David's eyes, see *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On all faces encompassed within a single paradigmatic face, see below, pp. 463–64, n. 52.

37. **seven types of gold…** Rabbi Shim'on reports two different traditions regarding seven colors of King David's hair: the first, its source unstated, and the second from the *Book of the Generations of Adam* (Genesis 5:1). According to the latter, the seven different colors of hair refer to the

hair on the different parts of King David's body, rather than the hair on his head. King David signifies *Malkhut*, which is the seventh of the lower *sefirot*, and thus he contains seven types of gold within him.

See *Zohar* 2:70a (*RR*). On the seven types of gold, see BT *Yoma* 44a–b, in the name of Rav Ḥisda: "There are seven types of gold: Gold and good gold; and *gold of Ophir* (1 Kings 10:11); and *glittering gold* (ibid. 10:18); *shaḥut gold* (ibid. 10:17); *closed gold* (ibid. 10:21); *parvayim gold* (2 Chronicles 3:6). Gold and good gold, as is written: *The gold of that land is good* (Genesis 2:12) [implying the existence of gold of a higher quality]. *Gold of Ophir*—coming from Ophir. *Glittering* [*mufaz*] *gold*—because it resembles *paz*, the luster of pearls. *Shaḥut gold*—[*shenitve ke-ḥut*], because it is spun like thread [*shaḥut* is a contraction of the words *shenitve ke-ḥut*]. *Closed* gold—because when a shop opens to sell it, all the shops close. *Parvayim gold*—because [its redness] resembles the blood of bulls [*parim*]."

See JT *Yoma* 4:4, 41d; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:1. On David's head and seven types of gold, see *Zohar* 2:147a, 148a; 3:84a; *ZḤ* 32b (*TZ*); *TZ* 70, 123b–124a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 39 (46–47); Vol. 5, pp. 344–46.

38. **embossed upon his right arm...** Another distinctive feature of King David (and his descendants) is this unusual marking on his skin, its permutations having a dynamic effect on his military prowess.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Like the Tower of David is your neck, built in courses; a thousand shields* [or: *bucklers*] *hang upon it, all the weapons of the warriors*. On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:209b; 3:141a.

The verse from Proverbs reads in full: *The name of YHVH is a tower of strength, into which a righteous one runs, secure*. On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:37b.

39. **split eyes... madness in his heart...** These strange eyes indicate a certain wickedness within. "Split eyes" renders עיינין... פקיעין (*ayyanin... peqi'in*). *Or Yaqar* and

Matoq mi-Devash render it as עיינין... פקיחין (*ayyanin... peqi'ḥin*), "perceptive eyes."

On split (or ruptured) eyes, see BT *Avodah Zarah* 65a. On the physiognomy of the lips, see BT *Me'ilah* 17b; *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:270 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, pp. 18–19 (English translation: 54); *Zohar* 2:75b; *ZḤ* 36a (*RR*).

40. **those markings will disappear...** One of the principles of physiognomy in *Raza de-Razin* is that changing one's behavior will affect one's appearance.

The text of *Raza de-Razin* does not systematically indicate when the description of one case ends and another begins. In this case, cf. the paragraphing of *Sullam*; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

41. **reddish...** Traditional commentaries explain that the predominance of redness in this description indicate that this person is dominated by the side of Judgment. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

42. **small ears** On the physiognomy of ears, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:270 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, p. 19 (English translation: 54); Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 29a; *Zohar* 2:75b; *TZ* 70, 130a; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1, 47b.

43. **thick lips** This is one of the cases where the *Zohar* states explicitly that physical features do not ultimately determine behavior; rather, that one can overcome the conventional moral correlates of specific physical features.

See *Zohar* 2:75b; *ZḤ* 36a, c (both *RR*). For other sources, see above, note 39.

44. **white hair...** The vision of the Ancient of Days with white hair from Daniel 7:9, signifying mercy, may influence the image here. The verse from Daniel reads: *The Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece*.

See *Zohar* 3:140a (*IR*). On green eyes, see *ZḤ* 35b (*RR*). Cf. ibid. 32c (*TZ*).

At this point in the manuscripts (O2, L23) and the early printed editions (as in the standard edition) there is a passage of *Matnitin*, but the contents of these two Zoharic strata are so different that this translation does not include the *Matnitin* passage here.

45. **White eyes** See *Or Yaqar* and *Matoq mi-Devash*, who explain that this adjective means somewhat whitish, rather than fully white. Cf. *Sullam*, who reads it literally.

46. **he repents…** This person's repentance generates one set of features in his right and left eyes that are reversed if he returns to his previous debased behavior.

"Smashing chunks of ice" renders תבר גזיזא דברדא (*tavar geziza de-barda*); alternatively, "icicles, hail." See BT *Berakhot* 18b; *Zohar* 2:140b. Here, Rabbi Shim'on interprets the wall of ice as the preventive barrier erected by repentance.

47. **Now there are six…** This phrase may indicate that these features correspond to the repentant described above.

48. **פא (*pe alef*) in its fullness…** Many of the facial types examined in *Raza de-Razin* are identified with one or more of the letters derived from the words זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *this is the Book* [*of the Generations of Man*], from Genesis 5:1. Here, the use of the linguistic symbolism is expanded, expressing an enigmatic spiritual quality in terms of the fully spelled-out letter פ (*pe*).

Raza de-Razin ends abruptly in the standard printed editions, continuing in *ZḤ* 35b–37c. The continuation is also printed in *Zohar* 2:272b–276a (*Tosafot*).

49. **one in his mouth and one in his heart…** He is disingenuous.

50. **sexual relations with a menstruant…** See Leviticus 15:24; 18:19; 20:18; BT *Yevamot 54a–b, Shevu'ot* 18b; *Baraita de-Niddah*, 1:2–7; 2:4, 7; 3:4; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Issurei Bi'ah* 4:1, 3; Naḥmanides on

Leviticus 18:19; *Zohar* 1:126b; 2:3a–4a; 3:79a, 290b (*IZ*). On the dangers associated with menstruation, see M *Shabbat* 2:6; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:948–53; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 32. On the menstruant in Kabbalah, see Koren, *Forsaken*. For a physiognomic indication of lying with a menstruant, see *Zohar* 2:77b.

51. **marking is black…** On this black mark, see *Zohar* 2:77b; *ZḤ* 37a (*RR*).

52. **three lines crossing over…** For a similar configuration, see *Zohar* 2:71a (*RR*).

53. **letter פ (*pe*) in its fullness…** Spelled out as פא (*pe alef*), but the letter ר (*resh*) is not spelled out. See above, note 48.

54. **he holds out a shred of a curtain…** The purpose of holding a rag before his face (construing in its most literal sense the phrase rendered as "in front of him") is enigmatic, but it may be intended as protection from the evil eye. Holding a rag in front of one's face recalls the legal prescription for a person afflicted with scaly skin disease. See Leviticus 13:45. See *Matoq mi-Devash*.

55. **his eyebrows precede him…** On account of their being so bushy. Such a person is to be avoided.

56. **when it serves his interests…** This clause renders כד יבא לתועלתיה (*kad yavo le-to'alteih*), following S. The other printed editions read כדיבא לתועלתיה (*kadiva le-to'alteih*), "he lies to serves his interests."

57. **in the shape of a Greek ג (*gimmel*)…** The letter *gamma*. See *Arukh*, s.v. *gam*.

58. **other secret teachings about eyes…** Though the previous example ostensibly concluded the lore about eyes, this additional material shows how magical texts are often compilations of found material, rather than systematic works.

59. **consummation of letters…** His perfect standing among the letters could refer to being represented among all the letters from the words זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *this is the*

Book [*of the Generations of Man*], from Genesis 5:1, or to letters being fully spelled out. The exception to the alphabetic perfection refers to the reverse sequencing of the letters ר (*resh*) and פ (*pe*). See *Sullam*; above, notes 17, 48.

60. **three lines on his forehead…** On metoposcopy (physiognomy of the forehead), see above, note 19.

61. **meet but do not meet…** They traverse almost the entire forehead. Meanwhile, this fellow has one black hair and one white hair that emerge from the unusual image on his abdomen.

62. **urge to urinate…** Rendering לאושדא שתן (*le-oshda satan*), playing on the term שטן (*satan*), "Satan," which alludes to the serpent. The play is evident in the imagery as well, with the phallus-shaped serpent attacking the sinner's penis—the sin constricting the "neck" of each. The sin hangs around the neck of the serpent as a kind of medallion, an award that allows the prosecuting serpent to pursue its prey.

63. **covenant with which he sinned…** The mark of circumcision is the sign of the Jewish covenant with God. Adultery (and other sexual transgressions) is a violation of that covenant, and thus it elicits a punishment of measure for measure. Some time after the sinner repents, the serpent eases the suffering by inserting the ligature into the great depth, apparently a holding place for transgressions until the person's final judgment.

The punishment sounds like a description of venereal disease with attendant prostatitis or urethritis (infectious or inflammatory), persisting even after the person has done *teshuvah*, repentance.

On the severe consequences of adultery, see Proverbs 6:29; *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 1:7; BT *Ḥagigah* 9b, *Sotah* 4b (and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *hi*), *Bava Metsi'a* 58b; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:6. Most of these sources quote Ecclesiastes 1:15: *What is crooked cannot be straightened*.

64. **releases that sin from around his neck…** This sin is so grievous that *teshuvah* is impossible during the perpetrator's lifetime; it can be purged only if he dies repentant and is then punished in the afterlife. Traditional commentaries explain that the transgression is removed from around the serpent's neck.

On atonement for adultery through the punishment of strangulation, see BT *Bava Metsi'a* 59a; *Zohar* 3:44b. On the verse in Isaiah, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 7; JT *Yoma* 8:9, 45b–c; *Sanhedrin* 10:1, 27c–d; *Shevu'ot* 1:6, 33b; BT *Yoma* 86a, *Ta'anit* 11a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 29; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 2; *Midrash Mishlei* 10:1; *Zohar* 3:44b.

The context of the verse in Genesis (when Jacob hopes to propitiate Esau) reads: *For he thought, "Let me placate him* (literally *cover his face*) *with the tribute that goes before me, and after I shall look on his face, perhaps he will show me a kindly face."*

65. **If you say…** The verse in Isaiah 22 speaks of the faithlessness of idolatry, not adultery! The explanation is that since the word עון (*avon*), *iniquity*, is used in Numbers 5 and 2 Samuel to describe adultery, that meaning is applied to the verse in Isaiah as well.

Abner was a general in the house of Saul who appointed Saul's son Ish-bosheth as king (see 2 Samuel 2:8–9). In the war against the forces of David, Abner bedded the late Saul's concubine, eliciting a protest from Saul's son Ish-bosheth. The name means "man of shame."

66. ***eating…*** Another proof that the verse in Isaiah is referring to adultery is adduced from the reference to "eating" in the previous verse of Isaiah, an activity that is often associated explicitly or euphemistically with sexual intercourse, as seen in the following verses.

The verse from Numbers concludes: *and that woman shall bear her guilt*. The verse from Isaiah concludes: *Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!* Proverbs 30:20 reads in

full: *Such is the way of an adulteress: she eats and wipes her mouth, and says, "I have done no wrong."* See Alter, *The Wisdom Books*, ad loc. In the *Zohar* this verse sometimes refers to Lilith. See *Zohar* 2:196b; 3:47a, 72a, 180b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 83.

The verse in Genesis reads: *He* [Potiphar] *left all that he had in Joseph's hands, and, with him there, he gave no thought to anything except the bread that he was eating*. According to the Midrash, *the bread that he was eating* refers to Potiphar's wife. On the sexual interpretation of *the bread that he was eating*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 70:4; 86:6; *Targum Yerushalmi*; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 11; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32; Rashi; Ibn Ezra; Naḥmanides; *Sekhel Tov*; *Midrash Aggadah* on this verse and Numbers 1:13.

67. ***Stolen waters are sweet...*** This is another challenge to the assertion that adulterers receive their punishment in this world: the one who enjoys *stolen waters* apparently meets his fate *in the depths of Sheol*. The apparent contradiction is resolved with the explanation that the case in Proverbs refers to one who did not receive his punishment in this world (perhaps because he did not repent).

68. **ancestral merit...** Even if a sinner does not repent before death, the righteousness of his ancestors or his successors can provide redemptive merit. The verse from Psalms indicates that the transgressor will receive his punishment in this world, but it will be distributed across generations. The full verse in Job reads: *But one would not reach out against the afflicted if in his disaster he screamed*, meaning that if as a result of the chastening the sinner repented (*screamed*), he would not be castigated in the afterlife. If the son repents on behalf of the father, he frees the latter from his suffering.

On ancestral merit, see Vol. 11, pp. 261–62, n. 683. On the son conferring merit on the father, see BT *Sanhedrin* 104a; *ZḤ* 84c (*MhN, Rut*); Vol. 11, pp. 182–83, nn. 444–45.

69. **Crossed eyes…** This phrase renders עיינין עקימין (*ayyanin aqimin*), literally “crooked eyes,” denoting an internal twistedness. A cross-eyed person who behaves righteously demonstrates the complex dynamics between physical appearance, inner morality, and supernatural forces such as the *Sitra Aḥra*. While the demonic side controls this person’s eyes—attempting to lead him toward debased behavior—the person can overcome these urges through moral dedication. Nonetheless, he cannot control the effects upon others of his eyes’ gaze, since his eyes are under the direction of the *Sitra Aḥra*.

On the demonic quality of being cross-eyed or looking away from truth, see *Zohar* 2:237a; 3:63b; *ZḤ* 31d–32a (*TZ*); *TZ* 70, 126b, 137d. On the eyes as agents of sin, see JT *Berakhot* 1:4, 3c; *Tanḥuma, Shelaḥ* 15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ* 31; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 17:6.

70. **write י (*yod*) on his right hand…** *Yod* is the first letter of the divine name and thus serves an apotropaic function. The name of the letter *zayin* means “weapon,” another form of protection. The letters that comprise the spelled-out form of the letter י (*yod*) yields the root דוי (*dvy*), “to look out for; to espy.”

71. **corrupted the holy deed…** Apparently a euphemism for a sexual transgression. As seen above, these features are associated with lust and betrayal of the truth. Further, the letter *yod* is associated with the mark of circumcision, and with the penis generally, and thus through sexual misdeeds one violates that covenant. When God measured out the divine realm using the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness (see below), a green line—signifying the demonic realm—emanated as a byproduct; and this man abides in that realm. Through chiromantic analysis of the lines of his hands, his character can be discerned.

“Lamp” renders בוצינא (*botsina*), alluding to the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness, Hard Spark, or the Spark of Darkness, which radiates from *Ein Sof* and delineates the

stages of emanation. This *botsina* is also known as קו המדה (*Qav ha-Middah*), "Line of Measure," which gauges the flow of emanation, giving shape or measure to the *sefirot*.

On the letter *yod* and the penis, see *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14; *Shemini* 8; *Zohar* 1:2b, 13a, 56a, 95a–b; 2:36a, 216b; 3:142a (*IR*), 215b, 220a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51–52 (63); Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 131, 140, 167–68; Wolfson, "Circumcision and the Divine Name"; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48. Cf. *Bahir* 42 (61).

On the green line, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12a: "*Tohu*, Chaos—a green line that encompasses the entire world, from which darkness issued." See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 89; *Zohar* 1:11b; 2:74b (*Mat*); *ZḤ* 55a; Moses de León, *Or Zaru'a*, 268; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 71; idem, *Otsar ha-Kavod* on *Ḥagigah* 12a, p. 44b.

On *botsina de-qardinuta*, see *Zohar* 1:15a, 18b, 86b; 2:133b, 233a, 254b, 260a (last two *Heikh*); 3:48b–49a, 135b, 139a (last two *IR*), 177a (*SdTs*), 292b, 295a–b (last two *IZ*); *ZḤ* 57a–58d (*QhM*) (below, pages 419–42); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 145–51; Vol. 11, p. 576, n. 90. On chiromancy, see above, notes 1–2.

72. **dammed up...** This renders the term אטים (*atim*), "closed, obstructed, sealed." Balaam is described (Numbers 24:3, 15) as שתום העין (*shetum ha-ayin*), which is usually interpreted to mean either *whose eye is closed* or *whose eye is open*. The adjective *shetum* appears nowhere else in the Bible. Elsewhere in the *Zohar* it is treated as equivalent to סתום (*setum*), "closed." This person abides in the mystery of the letter ר (*resh*), spelled ריש (*resh, yod, shin*), but the letter *yod* does not connect entirely with the person. The meaning here may be that since the letter *yod*, as the first letter of the tetragrammaton, is the holiest of the letters, this person with this particular defect does not merit full contact with *yod*.

See BT *Sanhedrin* 105a and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *shetum ha-ayin*: "one eye open—implying that the other was closed."

See *Zohar* 1:68b; 2:69a, 237a; 3:63b, 147b. On the verse, see *Targum Onqelos*; Rashi; Ibn Ezra; Milgrom, *Numbers*.

The "defects" referred to may be a reference to those that disqualify priests for Temple service. See Leviticus 21:18–21.

73. **going to the crossroads...** The crossroads are commonly associated with divination and sorcery. The man's mother had engaged in witchcraft while pregnant and apparently during labor, causing physical and moral defects within the child. Her attempts after his illness ostensibly failed.

On crossroads, see Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 43, 207. "Shrunk" renders אזער (*az'ar*), attested as an alternate reading in V, Mz, and Margaliot. The standard reading is אזהיר (*azhir*), "glowed, shone."

74. **falsehoods...** This renders עתיקין (*atiqin*); alternatively, "harsh or insolent words."

See Psalms 31:19; Rashi; Ibn Ezra.

75. **switched...** This renders מתחלפין (*mitḥalfin*). Cf. *Sullam*, who interprets it as "pass over," based on Daniel 4:20.

76. **head bowed...** In the *Zohar*, a bowed head draws a comparison to a snake that coils its head before striking. The formulation regarding categories of markings is somewhat obscure, but apparently it indicates that of the various kinds of markings that people can have, some are leprous; and this person bears that type of disfigurement.

On the snake's bowed head, see *Zohar* 1:2b; 3:119b.

77. **all the other features...** This may refer to a case above in which a man has three long lines and three short lines on his forehead. See *Zohar* 2:72b (*RR*); cf. 73b (*RR*).

78. **thick lips...** On thick lips, see above, notes 39, 43.

79. **פ (*pe*), complete in its two letters...** Spelled out as פ א (*pe, alef*).

80. **fourth day of the week...** The fourth day of the week was believed to be ominous, with a prevalence of

demonic influences. See BT *Pesaḥim* 112b: “Do not go out alone at night, as it was taught in a *baraita*: One should not go out alone at night, neither on the night of the fourth day of the week [i.e., Tuesday nights] nor on nights of the Sabbath, because [the demon] Agrat, daughter of Maḥalat, she and 180,000 angels of destruction go out at these times. Each and every one of them has permission to destroy on its own.” Here, “the night of the fourth day of the week” is interpreted to mean sunset on the fourth day of the week.

On the influence of Mars, see BT *Shabbat* 156a: “One who was [born under the influence of] Mars will be one who spills blood. Rav Ashi said, ‘He will be either a blood-letter, or a thief, or a slaughterer of animals, or a circumciser.’ Rabbah said, ‘I was [born under the influence of] Mars and I do not perform any of those activities.’ Abbaye said, ‘My master also punishes and kills [as a judge].’” See BT *Shabbat* 129b; *Zohar* 3:281b (*RM*).

On the physiognomy of the beard, see BT *Sanhedrin* 100b. On the fourth day of the week, see JT *Ta’anit* 4:3, 68b; BT *Ta’anit* 27b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:1; *Soferim* 17:5; Rashi on Genesis 1:14; *Sefer Hasidim* (Margaliot) §517; *Zohar* 1:1a, 12a, 19b, 33b–34a, 146a, 166a, 169a–b; 2:35b, 167b, 205a, 264b (*Heikh*), 276a (*Tosafot*); 3:28b, 234a (*RM*); *Minḥat Shai* on Genesis 1:14.

81. **But if he repents…** This is another instance in which repentance brings about a change in physical features, and which shows the *Zohar*’s characteristic pietistic concerns for ethical behavior.

82. **jagged…** This word renders חדין (*ḥadin*); alternatively, “pointy.”

83. **letter ר (*resh*) alone** The man abides in the mystery of each letter “alone,” meaning when its name is not spelled out.

84. **His voice is nasal…** Literally, “he speaks through his nostrils because their orifices are constricted.”

85. **covetous…** He is a man of many lusts, desiring all kinds of things that he does not possess.

86. **if the lines are switched…** If the lines on his face are the inverse of the earlier arrangement, he will have sons (which were strongly preferred in the ancient and medieval Jewish contexts), or he will have one son but his wife dies in childbirth.

87. **those thousand who were gathered up…** In ancient times when the Temple was standing, God showed divine grace to one thousand righteous children a year (represented as "wafting a fragrance") by causing their premature deaths when it was apparent that they would sin subsequently if they continued living. After the destruction of the Temple, less than sixty such children would be taken annually. This practice reflects the blessed Holy One's desire to avoid exercising judgment and instead to assimilate these pure children, each one like a "spring flowing with Torah."

The simple sense of the verse in Job is that if there were one who could conquer Leviathan before God could, He would surely compensate him. Here, Rabbi Shim'on plays on the root קדם (*qdm*), "come before," to mean "premature," referring to the children who stand in front of God before their time.

On removing the righteous or innocent while they are still pure, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 6:2: "*My love has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices*, [*to graze in the gardens and gather roses*]. Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Ḥanina said, '…*My love*—this refers to the blessed Holy One; *His garden* refers to the world; to *the beds of spices*—these are Israel; to *graze in the gardens*—these are synagogues and houses of study; *and gather roses*—to remove the righteous in Israel.' What is the difference between the death of the old and the death of the young? Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Abbahu [gave different answers]. Rabbi Yehudah said, 'When the light of a lamp burns itself

out, it is good for the lamp and good for the wick. But when it does not burn itself out, it is bad for itself and bad for the wick.' Rabbi Abbahu said, 'If a fig is gathered when it is ripe, it is good for itself and good for the fig-tree. But if it is gathered while still unripe, it is bad for itself and bad for the tree.'"

See M *Sanhedrin* 8:5; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 218; BT *Ḥagigah* 5a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:15; *Zohar* 1:56b, 118b; 2:10b, 96a–b; *ZḤ* 12d, 20a–b (both *MhN*); Meroz, "Va-Ani Lo Hayiti Sham?," 169 (Addendum 3 in Volume 10, pp. 581–82); Benarroch, "The Mystery of Unity," 243–49.

On God teaching little children or their souls, see BT *Avodah Zarah* 3b (and Rashi, s.v. *gemulei me-ḥalav*); *Bereshit Rabbati* 5:24; *Sefer Ḥanokh* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:115–16); *Zohar* 2:96b, 113b, 169b; 3:191b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 280–81 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:134–35); Yisraeli, *Parshanut ha-Sod*, 163–65. Cf. *Kallah Rabbati* 2:9; *Zohar* 2:38b (*Heikh*). On the Heavenly Academy, see also BT *Bava Metsi'a* 85a; *Zohar* 1:4a; 2:96b, 113b; 3:161b–174a (*Rav Metivta*), 185b–186a, 192a, 197b; *ZḤ* 56a; next two notes.

Yofiel ("Beauty of God") is appointed over the study of Torah. On Yofiel, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 34:6; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§76, 302, 313, 387, 395, 397, 419, 560, 628; *Zohar* 1:108a (*Tos*); 2:206b, 247b (*Heikh*); 3:2b, 154a, 197b; *ZḤ* 61c (*MhN, ShS*), 64a, 68c (last two *ShS*), 90c (*MhN, Rut*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 65–67.

88. **Metatron...** Metatron teaches in his house of study and weaves his students' Torah novellae into wreaths for the blessed Holy One.

On the heavenly curtain, see BT *Ḥagigah* 15a; *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (in *Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:60). On Metatron's house of study, see *Zohar* 1:24a (*TZ*); 2:169b; 3:186a, 197b; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 98–100; preceding and next notes.

On weaving words into wreaths or crowns, see BT *Ḥagigah* 13b, and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *ve-qosher*; *Shemot Rabbah* 21:4; *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:59); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 97a; *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§582, 655–56, 821–22; Eleazar of Worms, *Sodei Razaya*, 74, 76–77, 112, 114; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 495; *Zohar* 1:37b, 132a, 167b, 168b–169a; 2:58a, 128b, 146b, 186a, 201b, 202b, 209a, 245b–246a (*Heikh*); Recanati, *Peirush al ha-Torah*, 26a; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 149–50, 152–54; Green, *Keter*, 20–41.

On Metatron in general, see 3 Enoch 3–4; BT *Ḥagigah* 15a, *Yevamot* 16b and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *pasuq zeh*; *Sanhedrin* 38b, *Avodah Zarah* 3b; *Zohar* 1:21a, 37b, 95b, 126a–b (*MhN*), 143a, 162a; 2:65b–66b, 131a; 3:217a–b; *ZḤ* 8d, 9d–10a, 10b, 12b, 24a, 25d–26a, 28b–c (all *MhN*), 42d, 69b (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:626–32; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 377–81; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 73–108; Lieberman, "Metatron, the Meaning of His Name and His Functions"; Abrams, "Boundaries of Divine Ontology"; Wolfson, "Metatron and *Shi'ur Qomah* in the Writings of Hasidei Ashkenaz"; Wolski, "Metatron and the Mysteries of the Night"; Vol. 11, pp. 453–54, nn. 269–70.

89. **academy of the Youth, Metatron...** The angel Metatron is often called נער (*na'ar*), "youth, lad, servant," based on the statement from Proverbs 22:6: חנוך לנער (*Ḥanokh la-na'ar*), *Train the youth*. The verb *hanokh* literally means *train*, but here is taken as well as a reference to the human *Hanokh*, Enoch, who was "trained" (or "transformed") into *Na'ar, a youth*, namely Metatron.

On Metatron as *na'ar*, "youth, lad, servant," see 3 Enoch 4:10; BT *Yevamot* 16b; *Zohar* 1:223b; *ZḤ* 42d; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42–43 (51); Idel, *Ben*, 130–33, 135–36, 147. On Enoch and his transformation into Metatron, see Vol. 11, p. 199, n. 494. On the two celestial academies, see *ZḤ* 56a.

90. **pluck him for Me…** This begins the process by which God arranges for a pure child to be removed from the world.

In the *Zohar*, the phrase *to gather roses* signifies the untimely death of the righteous and of children who have not yet sinned. Metatron is the patron angel of children who die prematurely and is the one who teaches them Torah in heaven. (In his human incarnation as Enoch, he, too was taken prematurely while he was still righteous.) Rabbi Shim'on engages in wordplay with שושנים (*shoshanim*), [*lips like*] *roses*, explaining that it should be read as ששונים (*she-shonim*), [*lips*] *reciting*. The *roses* to be picked are the ones piously reciting their lessons.

The גרן (*goren*), "threshing floor," or אדרא (*iddera*) in Aramaic, is a term used by the *Zohar* to refer to the celestial academy or that of the kabbalists. The term אדרא (*iddera*) means "threshing floor; barn; chamber." In *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:3, the Sanhedrin is described as דאזהרה אדרא (*iddera de-azharah*), "the threshing floor of enlightenment [or: admonishment]," because its members sat in semicircular rows, resembling half the shape of a threshing floor. See M *Sanhedrin* 4:3: "The Sanhedrin was arranged like half of a circular threshing floor so that they could see one another." See also *Targum*, Song of Songs 7:3; and cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11, where Rabbi Yoḥanan describes nighttime study as "the threshing floor of Torah." On the various connotations of the term *iddera*, see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 93–107.

On Metatron as the angel teaching children who die, see *ZḤ* 20a–b (*MhN*), 47c–48a (*MhN, Rut*). On Enoch having been taken while still pure, see Theodor on *Bereshit Rabbah* 25:1; *Wisdom of Solomon* 4:10–11; *Zohar* 1:56b; 2:10b. Cf. Hebrews 11:5.

On the wordplay *shoshanim/she-shonim*, see BT *Shabbat* 30b; *ZḤ* 20b (*MhN*), 47d (*MhN, Rut*).

In Song of Songs, שושנה (*shoshannah*) probably means "lily" or "lotus," though here it connotes "rose." See Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 489 (lily); Joseph ibn Akhnin, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 63–65 (rose); *Zohar* 1:1a (Vol. 1, pp. 1–2, nn. 1, 3–4, 6). A Ladino translation of the verse (*The Ladino Five Scrolls*, ed. Lazar, 4–5) reads: "Commo la roza entre los espinos, ansi mi conpañera entre las dueñas."

91. **scribal implements on his loins…** Gabriel carries scribal instruments because he is the overseer of judgments, though here he does not execute the verdict himself. One has one's learning "in his hands" if he has recited the teachings repeatedly, gaining mastery and retention. In the supernal academy of the blessed Holy One, such a person enjoys the sublimity of the Torah that he learned first in this world, then in the academy of Metatron, and finally via the esoteric secrets revealed above.

The notion of repeated recital of one's learning is exemplified in a teaching ascribed to Hillel in BT *Ḥagigah* 9b: "He who repeated his chapter a hundred times is not to be compared with one who repeated it one hundred and one times." On having full grasp of one's learning, see BT *Pesaḥim* 50a, and Rabbenu Ḥananel, ad loc.; *Bava Batra* 10b, and Rabbenu Gershom and Maharsha, ad loc.; *ZḤ* 80b–c, 84a (both *MhN, Rut*). Maharsha explains that the phrase signifies one who has composed his understanding of Torah in writing. Cf. BT *Yoma* 38b.

On Gabriel as overseer of judgments, see BT *Sanhedrin* 21b, 95b; *Yoma* 77a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:3; *Zohar* 1:99a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 55b; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 24–31. The image of an angel with "writing implements on his loins" presumably comes from a passage in Ezekiel (9:1–3, 11), which describes a divine agent in this manner. There the agent is designated as האיש, as is Gabriel in Daniel 9:21.

92. **endorsing secrets…** Yofiel is the angel of Torah and kabbalistic mysteries, and he travels between the two

celestial houses of study, approving all the mystical novellae that emerge from them.

"Endorsing" renders חתים (*ḥatim*), literally "sealed." On heavenly approval of Torah novellae, see BT *Ḥagigah* 15b; *Zohar* 3:173a. The image of sealing Torah originates in Isaiah 8:16: *Bind up the testimony, seal Torah among my disciples*.

On the lack of difficulties in the supernal academy, see *Zohar* 3:203b. On the Heavenly Academy, see, e.g., BT *Berakhot* 18b, *Bava Metsi'a* 85a–86a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:11; *Zohar* 1:4a, 7a, 38b, 41a (last two *Heikh*); 2:96b, 190b–191a; 3:185b–186a, 192a, 197b, 203b; *ZḤ* 36b; [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 280–81, 285, 288–91 (134–37); Scholem, *Devarim be-Go*, 1:278–83; Gafni, "'Yeshivah u-Mtivta," 25, 29–31; Kadari, "Talmud Torah, Mistiqah ve-Eskatologyah." On the distinction between the Heavenly Academy (or the Academy of the Firmament; headed by Metatron) and the Supreme Academy (headed by God Himself), see *Zohar* 3:173a; *Minḥat Shai* on Numbers 23:9.

The phrase in Psalms 84, מחיל אל חיל (*me-ḥayil el ḥayil*), *from rampart to rampart*, referring to the progress of pilgrims to Jerusalem, is often translated proverbially as *from strength to strength*.

93. **The nose is the completion…** The nose is the most distinctive feature of the face, and the word for "nose," חוטם (*ḥotam*), evokes the root חתם (*ḥtm*), "seal, complete."

See M *Yevamot* 16:3: "Evidence [of the identity of a corpse] may not be given except from [proof provided by] the face together with the nose." See Naḥmanides on Leviticus 21:18; *Zohar* 2:122b, 177b (*SdTs*); 3:130a–b, 136b, 137b (last three *IR*), 294a (*IZ*).

On the physiognomy of the nose, see *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Steele, 221; *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:269–70 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer*

Sha'ashu'im 2, p. 18 (English translation: 54); Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim*, 9, 29a–b; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1, 47b–48a.

94. **small, crooked, asymmetrical nose…** Since rabbinic law ascribes such significance to the nose, a misshapen nose—signifying an absence of humility—indicates that a person is no longer fully human. This person abides in the mystery of the letter ה (*he*), lacking complete form with the letter א (*alef*) at the end.

On a crooked nose, see *Sifra, Emor* 3:7; BT *Bekhorot* 43b; *TZ* 70, 145b. Cf. Rashi on Leviticus 21:18.

95. **thick lips** See above, notes 39, 43.

96. **laughing through his words** He is a scoffer.

97. **balanced between two letters…** Perhaps between the letters ה (*he*) and א (*alef*), which comprise the spelled-out form of *he*. Though bowing the head can indicate humility, this man continues to sneer, suggesting that he is like a snake that coils its head before striking.

On the snake's bowed head, see above, note 76.

98. **merit comes from his father…** Apparently, the father had married or taken care of an orphan, a virtuous act. Metatron, called Youth, provides for the welfare of orphans; and he records that deed, which serves subsequently as heavenly protection for his son.

On Metatron as Youth, see above, note 89. See *Matoq mi-Devash*; for a different explanation, cf. *Sullam*.

99. **children, lifespan, and sustenance…** See BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 28a, in the name of Rava: "Life, children, and sustenance do not depend on merit but on *mazzala*, destiny." In the *Zohar, mazzala* is associated with the root נזל (*nzl*), "to flow," and often refers to the flow of emanation from *Binah* through *Yesod*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on reads *al* hyperliterally: *above YHVH*—that is, above *Tif'eret*, to the place called מזלא (*Mazzala*), "flux of destiny," signifying *Keter*. Since Hannah was seeking to have children, she directed her prayer to a

higher realm, *Keter*, upon which the blessing of children depends.

Rabbi Shim'on plays on the apparent problem in the verse from Isaiah: it begins by addressing God in the second person—*You*—but then switches to the third person: *He*. Why doesn't it read *You will do*…? The answer is that *He* refers to the hidden realm of *Keter*, who cannot be addressed directly in the second person and from whom issues the sefirotic flow of blessing.

Here, too, Rabbi Shim'on reads the term *al* hyperliterally: *Cast your burden above YHVH*. Based on the continuation of the verse—*and He will sustain you*—Rabbi Shim'on indicates that the prayer must be directed *above YHVH*, to the realm of *Keter*, upon which sustenance depends.

מזלא (*Mazzala*) has a range of meanings in the *Zohar*: "constellation; planet; planetary influence; zodiacal sign; guiding star; destiny; fortune; guardian angel."

On the Hall of Merit, see *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*); 2:6a, 248b, 249b, 251a–b, 252b (last four *Heikh*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (81–82); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 37a, 74a. On the verse in 1 Samuel, see *Zohar* 3:79b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 189. On the passage in *Mo'ed Qatan*, see *Targum* on Ecclesiastes 9:2; Rashi on *Shabbat* 75a, s.v. *le-einei ha-ammim*; Ibn Ezra on Job 28:1; *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*), 115a, 137a, 156b, 159b, 160b, 180b–181a, 198a, 207b; 2:6a, 47b, 177a, 178b (last two *SdTs*), 252b (*Heikh*); 3:25b–26a, 77b, 79b, 134a (*IR*), 289a–b, 292b, 295b (last three *IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 193–94 (and Wolfson's notes); idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65–66 (82); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 12a, 37a–b, 74a, 95a.

On the verse in Isaiah 38, see *Zohar* 3:79b. The verse reads: *I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears*. יוסיף הנני (*Hineni yosif*), *I hereby add* [literally: *I hereby He will add*], *fifteen years to your life*.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *Cast your burden upon YHVH and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous*

totter.

100. **guarantors upon guarantors…** When the Angel of Death comes to take the man's soul, the blessed Holy One protects his wife and children by depositing them with Metatron for safekeeping. Since a pledge deposited with one person (normally with God in the case of souls) cannot then be used as a pledge to another, the man's family no longer serves as guarantor for the sinner, and therefore they "will not rise up" to be judged with him.

"Writ" renders פיטק (*pitaq*), "memorandum; name slip; decree carried by the Angel of Death" (derived from Greek *pittakion*). See *Qohelet Rabbah* on 3:2; *Zohar* 3:15a, 156b.

101. **that merit will shield his children…** The man with the specified facial features had a father who had somehow helped an orphan, accruing credit that protects his son later.

102. **this goes unnoticed…** See *Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. the explanation of *Sullam*: "He does not cause it to be seen by other people, so that they would not notice [his mark of sinfulness] on him."

103. **letter ה (*he*) in its fullness** That is, when its name is spelled out with two letters—הא (*he, alef*).

104. **fiery…** He is easily angered—and not quickly appeased. Throughout *Raza de-Razin*, people are said to abide in one or more of the letters ז-ר-ה פ-ס (*zayin, resh, he, pe, samekh*), which derive from the words זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *this is the book*, from Genesis 5:1. The significance of these letters is obscure. Cf. *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On having a voracious appetite, see BT *Pesaḥim* 49a, in the name of the rabbis: "Any Torah scholar who feasts excessively everywhere—will in the end destroy his house, widow his wife, orphan his chicks [i.e., his children], and his learning will be forgotten. Many disputes will come his way, his words will not be heeded, and he will desecrate God's name and the name of his master and the name of his father. And he will cause a bad name for himself, his

children, and his descendants throughout future generations."

105. **in his mother's milk…** That is, while still nursing.

106. **Eagle-Face** Cf. *Zohar* 2:75a, 77b.

107. **sons of the full moon…** Just as the moon waxes and wanes, so does this person begin in powerful condition, with declining health as he ages. *Sullam* and *Matoq mi-Devash* interpret the moon as a symbol for *Shekhinah*, a conventional kabbalistic association.

108. **If the features are switched…** Apparently with five broad lines and two fine ones on his forehead. Then he is like the new moon, not yet shining.

See BT *Berakhot* 7a, in the name of Rabbi Yose: "[Moses] said before Him, 'Master of the Universe, why do some of the righteous prosper while others suffer? And why do some of the wicked prosper while others suffer?' He replied, 'Moses, a righteous one who prospers is righteous born of righteous; a righteous one who suffers is righteous born of wicked. A wicked one who prospers is wicked born of righteous; a wicked one who suffers is wicked born of wicked.'" See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 22; *Zohar* 3:168a.

109. **not in any letter at all** This follows the reading of Mz. Cf. V, which reads: "כלא אתקשר (*kola itqashar*), everything tied together."

110. **two gnarled toes that cannot straighten…** Apparently caused by his deep-seated penchant for thievery.

111. **does him no good** *Matoq mi-Devash* suggests that he takes oaths to validate his assertions, but he has no credibility, and the oaths convince no one.

112. **days of letters…** Joyous periods in the Jewish calendar. See BT *Ta'anit* 29a, in the name of Rav: "Just as when Av begins one decreases rejoicing, so too when Adar begins, one increases rejoicing," and Rashi (s.v. *mi-she-nikhnas Adar*) explains that it is because of the miracles of Purim and

Passover that occur at this time (Passover occurs in the middle of Nisan). The beginning of Elul marks the beginning of a time of repentance, leading to the holidays in Tishrei. In the land of Israel the sixth of Marḥeshvan marks the last day before one begins supplication for rain in the daily liturgy. During these times, the letters of the alphabet shine forth in the world, so whoever is lacking the spiritual qualities conferred by letters should take this opportunity. Cf. *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

113. **naked souls...** If a person dies without having lived piously, his spirit lacks a garment of *mitsvot*; and so it is reincarnated for another chance.

In the *Zohar*, when *Tif'eret* joins together with *Shekhinah* in erotic union, He deposits within Her the "mystery of letters," the divine semen, or essence of divine creativity. Within *Shekhinah*, letters materialize in diminished form, resulting in an alphabet below, mirroring a supernal alphabet above. Letters produced from supernal loving union above yield mates for the naked souls below.

According to Talmudic tradition, Moses was born on the seventh of Adar, which is therefore considered to be a day of rejoicing. See BT *Megillah* 13b, *Qiddushin* 38a.

On naked souls, see *Zohar* 1:14b; 2:99b, 101a, 109a, 150a; 3:205b–206a. On being naked of *mitsvot*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:6; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 14; *Bahir* 141 (200); *Zohar* 1:224a–b. On the effectiveness of supplications to find a mate, see BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 18b; *Zohar* 1:91b.

On diminutive and large letters, see "Midrash Rabbi Akiva ben Yosef al Otiyyot *Qetanot* ve-Gedolot ve-Ta'ameihen" (in *Batei Midrashot* 2), 478–88; *Zohar* 1:3b, 159b; 2:132a, 174a, 180b, 205b, 228b; 3:2a, 165a, 220a; *ZḤ* 65d, 66c, 74c–d (all *ShS*); Ratzhabi, "Meqorot Ketivat ha-Otiyyot ha-Mshunot," 120–23. On the significance of letter symbolism in Kabbalah, see Wolfson, "Letter Symbolism."

On reincarnation in Kabbalah, see *Bahir* 86 (121–22), 104 (155–56), 126–27 (184), 135 (195); Naḥmanides on Genesis 38:8; Deuteronomy 25:6; Job 33:30; *Zohar* 1:48a, 131a, 186b–188a, 239a; 2:75a, 91b; 3:7a, 88b, 177a, 182b; *ZḤ* 59a–c (*MhN*), 89b–90a (*MhN, Rut*); Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, introduction to *Yevamot*, p. 25a; on ibid. 62a, p. 25c–d; *Ketubbot* 111a, p. 27c; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amey ha-Miẓwoth*, 250–57; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 242–43; idem, *Kabbalah*, 344–50; idem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 188–94, 237–38 (on the Catharist theory of reincarnation), 456–60; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 197–250 (on the Catharists, 199–200); idem, *Shedim, Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 186–214, 298; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1362–63; Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 370–96; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 291–327; Elior, "Torat ha-Gilgul be-Sefer Galya Raza"; Oron, "Qavvim le-Torat ha-Nefesh ve-ha-Gilgul"; idem, "Introduction" to Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 22–24 (and nn. 43–46); Schwartz, "Ha-Biqqoret al Torat Gilgul ha-Neshamot"; Yisraeli, *Parshanut ha-Sod*, 113–29; Ḥaggai ben Shammai, "Gilgul Neshamot be-Hagut ha-Yhudit be-Mizraḥ be-Me'ah ha-Asirit," 117–36. The *Zohar* section entitled *Sava de-Mishpatim* (2:95a–113a) constitutes the first extensive kabbalistic discussion of reincarnation.

114. **venture forth with a guide…** When souls transmigrate into this world at these auspicious times they are accompanied by angelic guides, who reinscribe the letters of the alphabet that had been inscribed upon them when they were first conceived. Those letters had been infused within them in their first incarnation by the blessed Holy One and two human parents. When souls are reincarnated at other times, they do not receive the letters anew.

See BT *Niddah* 31a: "There are three partners in [the creation of] a human being: the blessed Holy One, his father, and his mother. His father supplies the semen of

white substance—out of which [are formed] bones, sinews, nails, the brain in his head and the white of his eye; his mother supplies the semen of red substance—out of which [are formed] skin, flesh, hair, and the black of his eye; and the blessed Holy One gives him spirit and soul, beautiful features, eyesight, hearing, speech, the ability to walk, understanding and discernment. When his time to depart from the world approaches, the blessed Holy One takes back His portion and leaves the shares of his father and his mother with them." See BT *Qiddushin* 30b.

"Guide" renders פרוונקא (*parvvanqa*), deriving from the Middle Iranian *parwanak* and Middle Persian *parwanag*. See BT *Sukkah* 48b, *Sanhedrin* 38b, 82a, 96a; *Bava Metsi'a* 83b; Jastrow, s.v. *parvvanqa*; Sokolow, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, s.v. *parvvanqa*.

115. **new moon of Sivan...** Here, letters are said to be journeying in the world until the beginning of Sivan—when the Torah was given. At that point, a greater revelation occurs with the emergence of the large, transcendent letters. These letters remain disclosed until after the festivals that call for repentance and forgiveness. Afterward begins the rainy season in the land of Israel, a sign of blessing.

The text is obscure, apparently offering different time periods than those above. For an alternate explanation, see *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the propitiousness of the months Adar through Sivan, see *ZḤ* 92d (*MhN, Eikhah*).

116. ***Teshuvah*** **presides...** *Teshuvah* signifies the *sefirah Binah*, source of the supernal letters. Both the letters and people long to return in purity at this time.

117. **two months...** The letters remain in the world in Marḥeshvan and Kislev, but then withdraw during Tevet and Shevat. With the onset of the felicitous months of Adar, Iyyar, and Sivan, souls who unite with letters as they prepare for re-entry into this world will be destined to find their chosen mate. This lasts until the dangerous months of

Tammuz and Av, which are associated with letters of wickedness, who rule over the world while holy letters remain concealed.

The months of Tevet, Tammuz, and Av are ominous months in the Jewish calendar. Traditionally, on the tenth of Tevet, the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem began (2 Kings 25:2). On the seventeenth of Tammuz, the walls of Jerusalem were breached by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.E. and by Titus in 70 C.E. In each instance, three weeks later, on the ninth of Av, the First and Second Temples were destroyed. In *ZḤ* 92d (*MhN, Eikhah*) it is explained that שבט (*Shevat*) is also a baneful month on account of its etymological similarity to the word for rod, as in ושבט (*ve-sheivet*), *A rod, for the back of the senseless* (Proverbs 10:13).

On good and bad months, see BT *Pesaḥim* 111b; Judah ben Samuel ha-Ḥasid, *Tsava'at Rabbenu Yehudah ha-Ḥasid*, 41, and Margaliot's note there; *Zohar* 2:12a, 78b; 3:174a (*RM*), 259a; *ZḤ* 92d (*MhN, Eikhah*) and *Nitsotsei Zohar*, ad loc., n. 11; Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel," 602. On the seventh of Adar, see above, note 113.

118. **sometimes the letter י (*yod*) bonds with it...** This figure, who suffers from leprosy, is sometimes in the mystery of the letter ה (*he*) in its spelled-out form—הי (*he, yod*).

On leprosy as a sign of transgression, see BT *Sanhedrin* 107a, *Arakhin* 15b, *Karetot* 26a; *Sifrei, Devarim* 275; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Metsora* 1, 10; Judah ben Samuel ha-Ḥasid, *Sefer Gimatriyyot*, 47, 60; idem, *Sefer Hasidim* (Wistinetzky), 15, 20; Eleazar of Worms, *Rimzei ha-Haftarot*, 7; idem, *Sefer ha-Roqe'aḥ*, 317; Isaac ben Moses of Vienna, *Or Zaru'a, Hilkhot Niddah*, 340, 270a; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 18:19; Shoham, *On the Margins of a Minority*, 32–43.

119. **a lath on top of a brick...** Short lines on top of long lines. "Lath" renders אריח (*ari'aḥ*), one of the small

bricks that may be placed at intervals between rows of bricks, generally the width of a half-brick. See M *Eruvin* 1:3; BT *Eruvin* 13b, *Bava Batra* 3b. Cf. *Soferim* 12:9, where the terminology is transposed to the scribal rules of writing Scripture's poetry with full lines and half-lines.

120. **the black one…** On this black mark, see *Zohar* 2:77b; *ZḤ* 35b (*RR*).

121. **eating fish and drinking water…** According to some medieval rabbinic authorities, this was forbidden because it led to melancholy, even though it might be healthy for the body.

Saturn is the seventh of the "seven planets" (counting the moon and the sun), situated in the seventh sphere. It is strongly associated with a variety of afflictions (often related to the color black) in texts ranging from the ancient through medieval and renaissance periods. See next note.

On the danger of going out on Friday night (when Saturn is dominant), see BT *Pesaḥim* 112b: "One should not go out alone at night, neither on Tuesday night nor on Friday night, because Agrat daughter of Maḥalat [Queen of Demons] goes out together with 180,000 angels of destruction, each empowered to wreak destruction independently."

On eating fish and drinking water, see *Pisqei ha-Tosafot* on *Mo'ed Qatan* 11a. Cf. Palagi, *Kaf ha-Ḥayyim* 24:47.

On Saturn as the seventh planet, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:1; *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*). Cf. BT *Shabbat* 156a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 6. On negative associations with Saturn, see *Baraita de-Shemu'el ha-Qatan* 8 (in *Otsar Midrashim*, 2:546): "Saturn is in charge of poverty, deprivation, melancholy, destruction, illness, and internal wounds…." See Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* 2:8; *Baraita de-Mazzalot* 15 (in *Battei Midrashot*, 2:35); Donnolo, *Ḥakhmoni*, 70c (standard printing); Ibn Ezra, *Reshit Ḥokhmah*, xliv–xlv; idem, *Sefer ha-Te'amim*, 70–75; *Tosafot* on *Gittin* 11a, s.v. *Shabbatai*; *Zohar* 3:227b, 279b,

281b–282a (last three *RM*); *ZḤ* 32a, 33d; *TZ* 21, 56b–57a; 48, 85a–b; 70, 124b, 134a; Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*; Langermann, “Some Astrological Themes,” 59–60. On astrology in Kabbalah, see above, note 16.

The names Qurqafnei and Shamriron are obscure. The name קורקפני (*Qurqafnei*) probably derives from קרקפתא (*qarqafta*) “head, skull” (see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17a). שמרירון (*Shamriron*) presumably derives from the root שמר (*shmr*), “to guard, protect.”

122. **not over the holy people…** See BT *Shabbat* 156a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan/Rav: “There is no constellation for the Jewish people [i.e., Israel is immune from planetary influence].” Nonetheless, the Jewish people are enjoined to dress joyously for the Sabbath so as to manifest, and perhaps ensure, their freedom from Saturn’s negative influences.

The association of the people of Israel with Saturn was widely accepted by ancient Greek, Muslim, and Christian writers, up until the beginning of the early modern era; here, *Raza de-Razin* argues against that position. See the tenth-century remarks by the Arabic astrologer Al-Qabisi (Alcabitius) (as cited in Klibansky et al., *Saturn and Melancholy*, 131–32): “[Saturn] is bad, masculine, in daytime cold, dry, melancholy, presides over fathers… over old age, and dotage… the worried, the low-born, the heavy, the dead, magicians, demons, devils and people of ill fame—all this when his condition is good. But when he is evil, he presides over hatred, obstinacy, care, grief, lamenting, evil opinion, suspicion…. Further, he presides over miserly gains, over old and impossible things, far travels, long absence, great poverty, avarice…. He has the faith of Judaism, black clothing; of days, Saturday, and the night of Wednesday.”

On planetary influences on Israel, see Isaiah 47:13–14; Jubilees 12:16–18; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; *Tosefta Sukkah* 2:6,

Qiddushin 5:17; BT *Shabbat* 156b, *Sukkah* 29a, *Nedarim* 32a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 7; Abraham ibn Ezra on Exodus 33:17 (short); Deuteronomy 4:19; Solomon ben Adret, *Teshuvot* (ascribed to Naḥmanides), §283; Harari, *Ha-Kishuf ha-Yhudi ha-Qadum*, 341–52; Sela, "Abraham Bar Hiyya's Astrological Work and Thought," 145–48. On Torah study and commandments as protection from astrological influences, see *Tanḥuma, Shofetim* 10; *Zohar* 3:216b (*RM*). Cf. Maimonides, "Letter on Astrology."

On Saturn and the Jews, see Ibn Ezra, Commentary on Exodus 20:13 (long); idem, *Book of Reasons*, ed. Sela, 157–58; Zafran, "Saturn and the Jews," especially 16–18; Pedaya, "Shabbat, Shabbatai, u-Mi'ut ha-Yarei'aḥ," 150–54; Sela, "Abraham ibn Ezra's Appropriation of Saturn"; Idel, *Saturn's Jews*.

On *Shabbetai* (Saturn) and *Shabbat* (Saturday, the Sabbath), see *TZ* 21, 56b: "שבתאי (*Shabbetai*), Saturn—its letters are אי שבת (*i shabbat*), negation of the Sabbath," describing the liminality of Shabbat and its potential to be turned into its antipode. See *Sefer Yetsirah* 4:5; Abraham ibn Ezra on Exodus 20:14 (long); Baḥya ben Asher on Deuteronomy 18:11; Ginsburg, *Sod ha-Shabbat*, 163–67, nn. 378–83.

On proper dress on the Sabbath to ward off demonic forces, see Ginsburg, *Sod ha-Shabbat*, 165–67, n. 382. The versions in both V and Mz specify that one should wear "white or beautifully colored clothes," apparently reflecting the influence of contemporaneous practice in Safed. See Scholem, *ZḤ*.

123. **those bonded to Saturn...** Apparently referring to Gentiles who are dedicated to astrology. Their melancholic behavior elicits worldly knowledge from the celestial realm.

The name of the first Saturnine power is written here קרקפוני (*Qarqefunei*), but I have maintained consistency between the two spellings for the ease of the reader. The

inconsistency between the two spellings (in all the printed versions) attests to the strangeness of this name.

124. **always melancholy…** This affirms the astrological significance of being born when Saturn is dominant, but (as noted above, note 122), one may overcome this destiny through Torah study.

The Book of King Solomon is one of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the authors of the *Zohar*. See above, note 3.

On joy from learning Torah, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 48; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 12:3; *Midrash Tanna'im*, on Deuteronomy 11:22; BT *Ta'anit* 30a, *Arakhin* 11a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; 3:11; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 10:19; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 11; *Eliyahu Zuta* 13.

For the opposite interpretation of this passage, cf. *Sullam*.

125. **Then those two spirits leave…** Upon the arrival of the Sabbath. These spirits are "naked," bereft of the garment that is woven for them from Torah and commandments performed in this world.

On naked spirits, see above, note 113. On wandering souls called *dwellers*, see *ZḤ* 89c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 357–58. In those texts, the wandering souls had failed to procreate.

126. **They remain there the entire Sabbath…** Gaining respite from the misery of their wandering during the week.

On souls of the dead communicating through night visions, see *Zohar* 2:142a.

127. **that particular person…** The narrative returns to the fate of the person born under the dominance of Saturn. At the end of the Sabbath, Qurqafnei and Shamriron journey together with the naked souls.

128. **the one soul…** The soul of the person born under Saturn's influence is comprised of seventy aspects—apparently deriving from *Shekhinah*, who is sometimes

described as the divine androgyne's back, as may be alluded to here in the mention of coming "from behind." The true information conveyed by those spirits is compatible with the man's soul, but the false information has a rapport exclusively with the dark spirits from Saturn.

129. **will never find a redeemer…** Although this person lacks personal merits, and as a result never regains normal human status in this world, he does have ancestral merit residing within his soul. Thus, even though Saturn presides over him with the two nefarious spirits, he can maintain his composure with confidence.

130. **inscribed in the letter ה (*he*)…** Many of the physiognomic cases in *Raza de-Razin* are described enigmatically as "inscribed" in one or more of the letters that derive from the words זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *this is the book*, from Genesis 5:1. See above, note 17.

"He speaks pompously" follows the reading in S, whereas V and Mz both read "He speaks softly."

131. **long chain…** He has one or more illustrious ancestors, providing ancestral merit. See *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

132. **eunuch of the sun…** This phrase renders חמה סריס (*seris ḥamah*), referring variously to someone whose testicles did not develop properly; who has only one testicle; or who has congenital infertility. Alternatively, "natural eunuch."

See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 247; M *Yevamot* 8:4–6; 10:3, 6; 11:1; BT *Yevamot* 75a, 79b–80b, 83b; Rashi on *Yevamot* 79b, s.v. *seris ḥammah*; *heikhi dami seris ḥammah*; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Ishut* 2:11–14; Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Even ha-Ezer* 5; Caro, *Shulḥan Arukh, Even ha-Ezer* 5:7; Lev, *Genital Trouble*, 126–30, 134–52, 286–439.

133. **holy soul…** Souls are engendered by the union of the divine couple *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, signified here by "King" and "*Matronita*," respectively. The simple meaning of the previous verses in the chapter of Psalms describe the

formation of the fetus within the womb. Here, *Shekhinah* is symbolized by *the earth*, and the verse in Psalms is interpreted to mean that two sites within Her womb separately generated the masculine and feminine aspects of soul within Primal Adam.

On the divine couple as parents of the soul, see *Zohar* 1:245b; 2:12b, 94b (*TZ*); 3:7a, 174b. On the androgynous nature of Primal Adam (and of the soul), see Plato, *Symposium* 189d–191d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1; BT *Berakhot* 61a, *Eruvin* 18a; *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 2; *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5; *Bahir* 116 (172); *Zohar* 1:2b, 13b, 34b–35a, 37b, 47a, 55b, 85b, 91b, 165a; 2:55a, 144b, 167b, 176b, 178b (last two *SdTs*), 231a–b, 246a (*Heikh*); 3:5a, 10b, 19a, 44b, 83b, 117a, 283b, 292b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 62b, 72b (both *ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1355–56; Wolfson, "Woman—the Feminine as Other"; Mopsik, *Sex of the Soul*, 75–114; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 53–103.

134. **arousal from the side of the female...** It is a general principle in Kabbalah that in order to elicit blessing from the male above, arousal must be initiated from the female below. The "north" usually represents *Gevurah*, but here it symbolizes *Shekhinah* on the left. Then the sun (and Jacob), alluding to *Tif'eret*, comes forward to couple with *Shekhinah*, signified by the moon and Rachel—after which all human beings, signified by "forces of the world," issue from Primal Adam.

On arousal from the feminine (or from below), see *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 220a (standard editions), 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 35b, 47b, 125a, 184a–b, 232b, 265a (*Heikh*); 3:40b, 86b, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 113b, 118a, 119a, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144. Cf. BT *Niddah* 31a.

On Jacob as the sun, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:11.

The verse in Isaiah reads: *I roused him from the north, and he comes; from the rising of the sun, one who invokes*

My name. He comes upon rulers like mortar, as a potter treading clay. On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:186b.

135. **east to west…** As an embryo, Primal Adam spans "east to west," symbolized by *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, encompassing masculine and feminine aspects. According to rabbinic legend, God showed Adam all his righteous descendants in a vision called the *Book of the Generations of Adam*. The simple meaning of ספר תולדות האדם (*sefer toledot ha-adam*) is the *Book of the Generations of Adam*, but here it also means the *Book of Human Features*, referring to the physiognomy of *Raza de-Razin*. All human faces with their features are purportedly contained within this book—all as manifestations of the letters *zayin, resh, he, pe, samekh*, and final *tsadi*, which are derived from the words זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *This is the Book*.

See above, note 5. On these letters (including the enigmatic *tsadi*), see above, note 17.

Psalms 139:16 reads in full: *Your eyes saw my formless mass* [or: *my embryo*]; *in Your book they were all inscribed, days were formed—not one of them exists*. On this verse, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 24:2; BT *Sanhedrin* 38a; Rashi; *Zohar* 1:91a, 121a–122a (*MhN*), 224a, 233b.

136. **inscribed… in the skin of Adam…** As the stars are ensconced in the sky, so are furrows and markings inscribed upon Primal Adam's body, signifying all those spiritually destined to issue from him. "All inscribed there" designates only the people of Israel—only they fulfill that ideal destiny and can be truly called *adam*, "human."

On the inscription of future generations on Adam's body, see Ibn Ezra on Psalms 139:16.

The ethnocentric interpretation of the term *Adam* is first expressed by Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai in BT *Yevamot* 60b–61a: "The graves of Gentiles do not impart impurity by a tent [i.e., one who stands on or bends over such a grave, thereby constituting a tent with his body, is not rendered impure], as is said: *You, My flock, flock of My pasture, are*

adam (*human*) [*and I am Your God*] (Ezekiel 34:31). You are called 'human'; Gentiles are not called 'human'."

Rodney Needham has noted that "it is a frequent report from different parts of the world that tribes call themselves alone by the arrogant title 'man,' and that they refer to neighboring peoples as monkeys or crocodiles or malign spirits." See Needham, *Primordial Characters*, 5.

See BT *Bava Metsi'a* 114b, *Karetot* 6b; *Tosafot* on *Yevamot* 61a, s.v. *ve-ein ha-ovdei kokhavim*; on *Bava Qamma* 38a, s.v. *ela adam*; on *Sanhedrin* 59a, s.v. *ela ha-adam*; *Zohar* 1:20b; 2:25b (*Piq*), 86a; 3:143b, 173a, 219a; *ZḤ* 78d (*MhN, Rut*); Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 42–57. Cf. M *Avot* 3:14; *Bava Qamma* 38a; *Avodah Zarah* 3a; *Sanhedrin* 59a.

On Israel as arising in God's thought before Creation, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 19; *Midrash Tehillim* 93:3; *Zohar* 1:24a (*TZ*), 118b; 2:108b, 119a (*RM*); *ZḤ* 88d (*MhN, Rut*).

Isaiah 40:26 reads in full: *Lift your eyes on high and see: Who created these*? *He who brings forth their array by number and calls them each by name. Because of His great might and vast power, not one fails to appear*. Isaiah 41:8 reads in full: *You, Israel, My servant; Jacob, whom I have chosen, seed of Abraham My lover*. The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *Holy is Israel to YHVH, the first fruits of His harvest. All who eat of it will be held guilty; evil will befall them—declares YHVH*.

Psalms 139:16 in MT reads: *In Your book they were all inscribed*. For other instances of a difference between the Masoretic spelling or wording and the *Zohar*'s reading, see *Zohar* 1:32a–b, 58b, 83b, 84a, 93b, 106b, 122b (*MhN*), 151a; 2:3b, 40a, 41b (*Piq*), 82a, 83a, 124b, 167b, 177b (*SdTs*), 182b, 246b (*Heikh*); 3:4b, 6a, 30a–b, 34a, 40b, 42b, 57b, 68a, 74b–75a, 76b, 80b, 86a–b, 129a (*IR*), 184a, 202b, 203b, 207a; *ZḤ* 48a (*MhN, Rut*), 56d (*QhM*), 60c (*MhN, ShS*), 71c (*ShS*), 75a, 79b, 80b, 81d, 85d (last five all *MhN, Rut*); Jedidiah Solomon Norzi, *Minḥat Shai*, passim (e.g., on

Numbers 7:1); Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 27–34, 73–74; Rosenfeld, *Mishpaḥat Soferim*. On this phenomenon, see *Zohar* 3:254a (*RM*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:55–56; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 50, 131–32, n. 125; Abrams, *Kabbalistic Manuscripts and Textual Theory*, 389–90.

On the same phenomenon in rabbinic literature, see BT *Qiddushin* 30a; Lewin, *Otsar ha-Geonim, Berakhot* 48a, 113–14; *Megillah* 4a, 6–7; Rashi on BT *Zevaḥim* 118b, s.v. *velo*; *Tosafot, Shabbat* 55b, s.v. *ma'aviram*; *Niddah* 33a, s.v. *ve-ha-nissa*; *Sha'arei Teshuvah* (*Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim*), 39; Solomon ben Adret, *Teshuvot* (wrongly ascribed to Naḥmanides), §232; David ibn Zimrah, *Teshuvot*, Part 4, 101, §1172; Jedidiah Solomon Norzi, *Minḥat Shai* on Leviticus 4:34; Malachi ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Yad Mal'akhi* 1:149b; Aptowitzer, *Das Schriftwort in der Rabbinischen Literatur*; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, 23:113; Maori, "Rabbinic Midrash as Evidence for Textual Variants in the Hebrew Bible"; Rosenthal, "Al Derekh Tippulam shel Ḥazal be-Ḥillufei Nussaḥ ba-Miqra."

137. ***Days were formed…*** Exodus 12 opens with God's injunction to Moses regarding the establishment of the lunar calendar, and the verse cited here is interpreted to mean that the splendor of the days in the upper world (signifying the sun, solar calendar, and *Tif'eret*), should be drawn down into a corresponding number of days in the lower world (signifying the moon, lunar calendar, and *Shekhinah*).

The word משכו (*mishkhu*), *draw*, has the numerical value in *gimatriyyah* of 366, approximating the 365 and one-quarter days in the solar year—the discrepancy being mitigated by a principle that is operative in many areas of *halakhah*: part of a day counts as an entire day. Thus the drawing down of splendor acts both to correlate solar and lunar calendars, and to promote the loving union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

See *Zohar* 3:249b–250a. On the principle that part of a day is like an entire day, see JT *Kil'ayim* 2:3, 27d; BT *Pesaḥim* 4a, 55a; *Mo'ed Qatan* 16b, 17b, 19b, 20b; *Nazir* 5b–6b, 15b–16a; *Bekhorot* 20b–21a; *Niddah* 33a.

The verse in Exodus reads: *Draw and take yourselves sheep for your clans and slaughter the Passover offering*.

138. **no days to shine...** According to rabbinic legend, King David was destined to die at childbirth, but Adam offered him seventy of his own thousand allotted years, so David lived for seventy years and Adam for 930. Here, the gift is deduced from breaking down the word טפחות (*tefaḥot*), *handspans*, into its composite parts: ט (*tet*)—which stands for the word טוב (*tov*), "good" (or "virtuous, pleasing")—and פחות (*paḥot*), "diminished." Adam acted virtuously to David—who was *goodly to look on*. At the beginning of history, Adam, who bore the images of all the righteous inscribed upon his body, bestowed life upon David, who becomes the prototype of the messiah and symbol of history's consummation.

On Adam's donating seventy years to David, see Jubilees 4:30; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19, and David Luria, ad loc., n. 31; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:10; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; *Bereshit Rabbati* 5:5; *Avot de-Rabbi Nathan* B, 42; *Zohar* 1:55a–b, 91b, 140a, 168a–b, 233b, 248b; 2:103b, 235a; *ZḤ* 67d (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 68 (85); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 383.

On David's handsome appearance, see above, note 34. On the image of David as impoverished (as indicated in Psalms, traditionally ascribed to David), see Psalms 40:18; 70:6; 86:1; 109:22. On King David's righteousness and longevity, see *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥayyei Sarah* 4; *Midrash Mishlei* (Buber) 16:31; *Bereshit Rabbati, Vayḥi* 50:23 (262).

The full verse in Psalms 39 reads: *Look, mere handspans You made my days, and my lot is as nothing before You. Mere breath is each man standing. Selah*.

139. **genuine beauty of Primal Adam…** See BT *Bava Metsi’a* 84a: “The beauty of our father Jacob resembled the beauty of Adam.” The *Zohar* transforms the Talmudic comparison into an affirmation of identity. This beauty was manifest in Jacob’s dedication to Torah study and worshiping God.

Building on the rabbinic interpretation of *tents* as a reference to Torah study, the rabbis explained that Jacob studied in the academies of Shem and Eber. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:10; 68:5; 84:8; BT *Megillah* 17a; *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi* on Genesis 25:27; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayishlaḥ* 9. On “tents” signifying houses of study, see Vol. 11, p. 473, n. 332.

According to rabbinic teaching, originally divine service in the Temple was to be performed by the firstborn of each family, but after the sin of the golden calf, this privilege was transferred to the Levites.

“Aroused” renders אתערו (*it’aru*). In medieval Hebrew, the corresponding idiom refers to “having one’s awareness aroused,” “arousing the [latent or potential] meaning” of a particular word or phrase, or expounding or interpreting more generally. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 392; Ben-Yehuda, *Millon*, 9:4392a–b.

On the beauty of Adam and Jacob, see BT *Bava Batra* 58a; *Zohar* 1:35b, 142b, 145b–146a, 168a, 222a; 2:111a–b, 141b, 169b; *ZḤ* 65a (*ShS*); Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 128.

On the firstborn and divine service, see Numbers 3:12 and Rashi, ad loc.; *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:13; *Shemot Rabbah* 4:8; 31:8; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 3:5; 4:8; 12:7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5, 20b.

140. **Jacob’s possession…** A vast library of esoteric wisdom was transmitted from the patriarchs—Adam, Enoch, and Abraham—to Jacob.

The *Zohar*’s Book of Enoch, though influenced by Enochic literature, is not identical with any of its particular volumes. It comprises one of the many books housed in the

real or imaginary Zoharic library. *Sefer Yetsirah* (*The Book of Formation*) is the earliest work that comes to be seen as a foundational text in the kabbalistic tradition. Traditionally ascribed to Abraham and written in a highly condensed and enigmatic style, the work combines Neo-Pythagorean number mysticism and letter mysticism. Most likely, it was written in the eighth or ninth centuries somewhere in the Middle East, though some scholars assign it a first-century date in Palestine.

See BT *Avodah Zarah* 14b: "Rabbi Ḥisda said to Abimi, 'There is a tradition that the [tractate] *Avodah Zarah* of our father Abraham consisted of four hundred chapters; we have learned only five, yet we do not know what we are talking about!'"

The verse in Genesis reads: *The boys grew up. Esau became a skilled hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was* איש תם (*ish tam*), *a simple man, dwelling in tents*. The word *tam* means "simple, innocent, plain, mild, quiet, sound, wholesome, complete, perfect." *Targum Onqelos* renders *ish tam* as גבר שלים (*gevar shelim*), "a complete (or perfect, consummate) man."

On the Book of Primal Adam, see above, note 5. On the Book of Enoch, see *Zohar* 1:13a, 37b, 58b, 72b; 2:55a, 100a, 103b, 105b, 180b, 192b, 217a; 3:10b, 240a, 248b, 253b; *ZḤ* 1c, 3b, (both *SO*). See Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:158, 163, nn. 60–61; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 80–83.

141. **first in perfection...** Jacob is the first biblical figure to be called "consummate" (see previous note). Unlike all his vaunted predecessors, Jacob alone produced righteous children exclusively. Abraham signifies *Ḥesed*, which is also symbolized by silver; he produces Ishmael and other flawed offspring, represented as "dross of silver." Similarly, Isaac signifies *Gevurah*, symbolized by gold, who produces Esau, represented as "dross of gold." The rabbinic tradition treats these children via synecdoche as archetypes of Islam and Christianity respectively. Here

Raza de-Razin concludes its ethnocentric summary by rejecting these other religions and their adherents as faulty and debased.

On Jacob's status among the patriarchs, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 76:1, in the name of Rabbi Re'uven: "The chosen of the patriarchs is Jacob, as is said: *For Yah has chosen Jacob for Himself* [*Israel as His own treasure*] (Psalms 135:4)."

See also BT *Pesaḥim* 56a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish: "[Upon his death bed] Jacob wished to reveal to his sons the end of days, but *Shekhinah* departed from him [depriving him of inspiration]. He said, 'Perhaps, Heaven forbid, there is a blemish in my bed [i.e., someone unfit among my children], like Abraham, from whom issued Ishmael, or like my father Isaac, from whom issued Esau.' His sons answered him, '*Hear, O Israel!* [i.e., Jacob]. *YHVH is our God, YHVH is one*—just as there is only *one* in your heart, so there is only *one* in our heart.' At that moment our father Jacob opened and exclaimed, 'Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom forever and ever!'"

See *Zohar* 1:119b, 133a, 144b, 149b–150a, 152a (*ST*), 163b, 171b, 172b, 173b, 180a, 207a; 2:23a, 26a, 48b. On Jacob being complete, see *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 8:7, 112c; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 31, 312; *Targum Onqelos* on Genesis 25:27; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:5.

On Jacob's perfect bed, see *Targum Yerushalmi* on Genesis 35:22; *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.) on Genesis 49:1; *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 8:7, 112c; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 31, 312; *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:5, 96 (pp. 1200–1202); 98:3; *Va-yiqra Rabbah* 36:5; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:7; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:35; *Zohar* 1:148a; 2:134a–b; cf. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 370–71.

On the defective natures of Ishmael and Esau, see, e.g., *Tosefta Sotah* 6:6; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 31; *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:5; BT *Pesaḥim* 56a; Rashi on Deuteronomy 32:9 and *Sukkah* 29a, s.v. *eloheiha*; *Zohar* 1:118b, 139a–b, 146a; 2:11a, 17a (*MhN*), 32a, 86a, 111a

(*SA*), 163b; 3:124a (*RM*), 192b, 199b, 246b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 23d, 27d (last two *MhN*), 47a, 76d, 78d (last three *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, "She'elot u-Tshuvot," 46; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 53–54 (66–68); Kiener, "The Image of Islam in the Zohar," 49–65; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 17–185.

1. **Secrets of the Letters…** This treatise describes the genesis of the *sefirot* from the letters of the tetragrammaton, *YHVH*, that is inscribed ethereally within the highest reaches of Divinity. After the *sefirot* come into relief through engraving within a heavenly tablet, they function as "chariots" that both support and crown the supernal letters.

The opening verses from Psalms and Jeremiah ask rhetorical questions regarding God's ineffability and supreme power, and *Sitrei Otiyyot* proceeds to describe in esoteric fashion the self-generating acts of *YHVH*.

The title *Sitrei Otiyyot* appears to have been appended at a later date. It is lacking in N23 and Cremona, while O2 reads *Secrets of the Letters of the Divine Name, from the Zohar*, apparently a late addition to the text. See Wald, "Notes."

On the *Secrets of the Letters*, see Wald, *The Doctrine of the Divine Name*, and his detailed commentary, 97–144; Wolfson, "Letter Symbolism and Merkavah Imagery," 224–36; above, pp. xviii–xix.

On the kabbalistic notion that the letters of the tetragrammaton symbolize all the *sefirot*, see Asher ben David, *Sefer ha-Yiḥud*, 112; *Zohar* 1:162a (*Tos*); 2:123b, 126b–127a; 3:10b, 65b, 267b; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 43b–45b.

The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? For it befits You, since among all the wise of the nations and among all their kingdoms, there is none like You*.

2. **concealment of the impression of existence…** The divine essence is expressed in the letters *YHVH* and these are first incised enigmatically in ethereal relief—simultaneously revealed and concealed. *Ketem Paz* and *Matoq mi-Devash* contend that the tablet upon which the inscription occurs is the *sefirah Keter*.

In Zoharic Kabbalah, a “chariot” is a supernal entity that supports another supernal entity above it. In *Sitrei Otiyyot*, the term “chariots” can signify the four *sefirot* (*Ḥokhmah, Binah, Tif’eret*, and *Shekhinah*) that support the four letters of the tetragrammaton, yet they themselves ride “upon [or: into] holy chariots.”

Throughout *Sitrei Otiyyot*, supernal entities (such as chariots and *sefirot*) are multiplied through the telescoping of one within the other, which produces a vast continuum of spiritual presences. As each letter of the tetragrammaton comes into relief, its corresponding chariot comes into existence and assumes its station below the letter, to bear and transport it. Esoteric knowledge of the divine name is interpreted in terms of the *ma’aseh merkavah*, the account of Ezekiel’s chariot (Ezekiel 1), a primary subject of inquiry in Jewish mysticism. Thus four letters correspond to four chariots—and in turn to the four celestial creatures who bear God’s chariot in Ezekiel 1:5.

“Impression” renders סרטא (*serata* or *sirta*), the nominal form of the root סרט (*srt*), “to mark, incise, inscribe, or make an impression.” See *Tosefta Shabbat* 11:6, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: “One is liable [for the prohibition of writing] two letters only on account of marking, for they marked the planks of the Tabernacle to determine each one’s mate.” This architectural pre-linguistic inscription signifies precisely the kind of marking intended by the author of *Sitrei Otiyyot*. *Serata* (or *sirta*) *de-qiyyuma* is a possible rendering of *al-sirat al-mustaqim* (“the straight path”) of Qur’an 1:6. See Kiener, “The Image of Islam in the *Zohar,*” 46*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 381. In M *Shabbat* 12:4, the same term refers to one who incises [letters] upon his skin, and it is used throughout the Zoharic composition called *Raza de-Razin* (see above, pages 317–69) to indicate the lines on a person’s face that reveal inner characteristics. Here, the sense is of letters that are both ethereal and “actualized” or “eternal.”

See Leviticus 21:5; *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:6; Wolfson, "Letter Symbolism and Merkavah Imagery," 225, n. 100. Cf. *Zohar* 1:132b. This reading follows O2, Cremona, and *Ketem Paz*, while Venice offers the more conventional סטרא (*sitra*), "aspect, side." See Wald, "Notes," 98.

3. **expounded...** Alternatively, "differentiated." After the introduction, Rabbi Shim'on begins to describe the process through which each of the four letters of the tetragrammaton *YHVH* comes into relief—their respective chariots ascending into them and then descending.

The "mystery" (or "essence") of the letter י (*yod*)—perhaps referring to its upper tip—rises to come into relief, as expressed in the one hundred worlds that are implicitly contained within it. The letter *yod* has the numerical value of ten—ramifying as ten within ten. Letter *yod*, representing *Ḥokhmah*, divine Thought, ascends into *Keter*, which is signified by "Will of Thought," utterly unknowable.

On the letter *yod* and its "mystery," see *Zohar* 2:177a (*SdTs*); 3:144b (*IR*), 289a (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 6c (*SO*). On the equation of ten and one hundred, see Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 6a. Cf. *ZḤ* 6b (*SO*). On *yod* ascending in Will of Thought, see *Zohar* 2:180a; *ZḤ* 6c (*SO*).

4. **nut...** When *yod* descends, it is concealed within *Binah*, represented by the "nut," and by the letter ה (*he*), as the second letter of the tetragrammaton. This "nut" is identified as the chariot below *Ḥokhmah*, both concealing and supporting it. The nut serves further as a treasury for *Ḥokhmah*, which is represented as a "point," or, orthographically, as the י (*yod*) in the letter ה (*he*), concealed beneath the overarching ד (*dalet*). The "six sides," signifying the six *sefirot*—*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*—are contained within the nut; at the same time, they serve as columns supporting from below.

The nut is a common symbol in Kabbalah for representing Divinity, since its hard outer shell that conceals and protects the fruit inside conveys effectively

both the complexity and mystery of God in the esoteric traditions. The description of the divine chariot (with its four creatures) as a four-chambered walnut containing the kernel was first used by Ḥasidei Ashkenaz in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

"Pillars" renders סמכין (*samkhin*); alternatively, "columns, supports, pedestals." It is the Aramaic translation of "sockets" in *Targum Onqelos* to Exodus 36:24, 26, 30. Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, however, the term *samkhin* regularly refers to pillars.

On the image of the nut, see *Zohar* 1:19b–20a, 44b (*Heikh*); 2:15b (*MhN*), 140b; *ZḤ* 5b (*SO*), 69c, 70d (last two *ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 156–60; Altmann, *Studies*, 162 n. 6, 172–79; Farber-Ginat, *Sod ha-'Egoz and its Development*; Abrams, *A Study of the Sod ha-Egoz*. On chariots carrying and transporting letters, see *Zohar* 2:132a–b, 210a. For alternate readings of this passage, see *Ketem Paz*; Wald, "Notes."

5. **From the side of that letter…** Returning to the description of the letter *yod*. The chariot emerging from *yod* is *Shekhinah*. Because *Shekhinah* has no light of Her own, She is perceived only when She receives illumination from above; and the apophatic formulation "concealed and revealed" signifies Her liminal nature. The בוצינא (*botsina*), "Lamp," refers to the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness, or קו המדה (*Qav ha-Middah*), "Line of Measure." These are different names for the primordial source, or divine tool, that radiates from *Ein Sof* and gauges the flow of emanation, giving shape or measure to the *sefirot*. In the course of the rising and falling in the emanative process, the sparkling or measuring itself serves as the chariot that supports the uppermost letter *yod*, representing *Ḥokhmah* and signified by a point.

The letter י (*yod*) is understood as comprising three parts (as described below): an upper tip—called here "first nexus" (or "knot, cluster, bond")—the main body of the letter, and a lower tip. The tip above often signifies *Keter*, the

first *sefirah*. Instead of קשרא קדמאה (*qishra qadma'ah*), "first nexus," O2 reads קוצא קדמאה (*qotsa qadma'ah*), "primary tip."

On the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness, see above, p. 343, n. 71. On apophasis, see Sells, *Mystical Languages of Unsaying*. On the three components of the letter *yod*, see *Zohar* 2:180a; 3:10b, 11b; *TZ* 69, 104b.

6. **three other sparks...** Three nexuses are the sources of sparks that signify the sefirotic axes on the right, left, and center. The first group of three sparks symbolizes the three *sefirot* on the right side—*Ḥokhmah, Ḥesed*, and *Netsaḥ*. The next sparkling causes *Binah* to emerge beneath *Ḥokhmah*, and the emergence of three sparks corresponding to *Binah, Gevurah*, and *Hod*. The last sparkling does not specify the number of sparks, though one can infer from the text below that three sparks emerge—*Tif'eret, Yesod*, and *Shekhinah*. This last stage marks the bonding with the "Mystery of Dust," a reference to either *Shekhinah* or to the mundane world below Divinity.

On the nexuses and sparks, see *ZḤ* 49b–c, 97b–c (*QhM*); *Ketem Paz* 1:262c. On the three nexuses, see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 397.

7. **nine pillars...** Standing within and below the supernal point *yod* are the ethereal roots of the nine *sefirot* (*Ḥokhmah* through *Malkhut*) that issue from the three sparks above—three each along three axes of right, left, and middle. Once *yod*, symbolizing the essence of *Ḥokhmah*, is fully actualized, the eight "pillars" below—representing *Binah* to *Malkhut*, which are latent in *Ḥokhmah*—become manifest. The stages of the imagery suggest an incremental emergence of the ineffable name *YHVH*. The mention of nine pillars above others refers enigmatically to the esoteric doctrine of *sefirot* that are above the *sefirot*, apparently manifesting in *Keter*. Further, since one point is supported by nine pillars—which constitute its chariot—and together the point and chariot equal ten, this paragraph attests to a combination of mathematical and linguistic conceptions of Divinity.

See Isaac the Blind, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 1; Naḥmanides, "Peirush Sefer Yetsirah," 107; Porat, *Kitvei ha-Iyyun*," 190; Matt, *The Book of Mirrors*, "Introduction," 9; Idel, "Ha-Sefirot she-me-al ha-Sefirot."

On this passage, see *Ketem Paz*. Cf. *Sullam*; Wald, "Commentary," 119–20; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the nine pillars, see *ZḤ* 7b (*SO*); cf. *Zohar* 2:180a.

8. **evoke and do not evoke names...** The nine pillars have definition and possess names from the perspective of the utter lack of differentiation above—yet they remain indistinguishable and inapprehensible from below. While Moses is normally identified with the letter ו (*vav*), alluding to *Tif'eret*, these nine pedestals far transcend his rung, which is called here "primary spark." In response to Moses' question in Exodus 33:18 (*Oh, show me Your glory*), God does reveal to Moses the *sefirot* as they can be apprehended by human beings of the highest rank.

The term *Ein Sof* here apparently signifies the hidden root of the nine pillars that represent the *sefirot*, residing within Will or Thought; or, alternatively, the transcendent One beyond the *sefirot*. The nine words cited from the verse in Exodus correspond to the nine pillars, thus fulfilling the preceding words of the verse: *I shall invoke the name YHVH*.

On *Ein Sof* as meaning "limitless," see *Zohar* 1:65a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:277; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 397; Idel, "Sefirot she-me-al ha-sefirot"; Valabregue-Perry, "The Concept of Infinity (*Eyn-sof*)"; idem, *Be-Nistar u-ve-Nigleh*.

9. **This letter ascends...** In preparation for the emergence of the first letter *he* of the tetragrammaton, *yod* ascends and is penetrated with light from an obscure source. As it proceeds back downward, it radiates luminescence from the abundance within it, forming a palace for its own concealment and glory. The palace is the letter ה (*he*), whose orthography includes two full sides, plus an opening on the third side (upper left) that enables it to receive influx from above. *Yod* enters into *Binah*,

consummating Her by shining light from the nine pillars within; it is represented at the bottom of the letter *he* by its small lower stroke, which receives shelter from above.

On *Ḥokhmah* as being contained within *Binah* as signified by a palace, see *Zohar* 1:15a. On the orthography of *he*, see *Bahir* 20 (28); Jacob ha-Kohen, "Peirush ha-Otiyyot," 46; *ZḤ* 67b, 70b, 71b–c, 72b–c (all *ShS*).

10. **ה (*he*), prepared and not prepared…** *He* signifies the root of *Binah*, which is on the brink of apprehensibility and thus "revealed and not revealed." Traditional commentaries explain the term זמין (*zammin*), "prepared" (or "poised, present"), with reference to Genesis 47:23: הא (*He*), *Here, is seed for you to sow the land*; they construe its first word (which occurs only twice in the Bible) midrashically as a reference to the letter *he*—and hence as a site of divine generativity. "To be crowned" is the literal meaning of לאתעטרא (*le-it'atra*), but here it means more broadly that everything within *he* becomes "manifest."

On *zammin*, see *Ketem Paz*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On *he* as suitable for engendering, see *Zohar* 1:96a; 3:298a; *ZḤ* 72b (*ShS*); Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 17:5. On crowning, see Wald, "Notes," 99.

11. **five chariots…** After the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness extends its luminescence to delineate the first *he* of the divine name, the letter *he* acquires five chariots, corresponding to the letter's numerical value. These five are correlated with *fifty marvels* via a *notariqon* that is executed upon the word נפלאות (*nifla'ot*) by breaking it down into component parts of נ (*nun*), *fifty*, and פלאות (*pela'ot*), *marvels*—fifty marvels that the Psalmist yearned to see within the Torah. A standard kabbalistic assumption, namely that each *sefirah* or other supernal entity comprises ten *sefirot* within it, allows for this equation of five with fifty. The five chariots associated with the first *he* of the tetragrammaton are thus fashioned into fifty *marvels*—that

is, hidden matters—which subsequently shine upon the five chariots associated with the second *he*.

In Zoharic Kabbalah, *Binah* is often characterized by the number fifty, based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu'el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)." See Naḥmanides, *Peirush al ha-Torah*, introduction, 3–4; *Zohar* 1:3b; *ZḤ* 48a, 82b, 90c (last three *MhN, Rut*); V206, 330b–331a (*Mat*).

The full verse in Psalms reads (according to its simple meaning): *Uncover my eyes, so I can see wonders out of your Torah*.

12. **These *fifty marvels* shine…** The letter *he* undergoes a series of processes as it ascends, becoming actualized and perfected. The *marvels* serve as chariots, raising *he* to nine pillars, each of which is associated with its own root. Then *he* is raised up farther—to the upper tip of *yod*, apparently alluding to *Keter*. Upon its descent, *he* is adorned with the components that raised it up, finally settling upon five pillars, which are presumably the chariots mentioned above. The paradoxical formulation "transmuting, not transmuting" echoes the ambiguities above—in which differentiation appears from the perspective below, but not from above. For the first time in *Sitrei Otiyyot*, the central kabbalistic categories of right and left are invoked, along with their respective resonances of mercy and judgment, as well as of masculine and feminine.

For various interpretations of this passage, see *Ketem Paz*; *Sullam*; Wald, "Commentary," 120–22; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

13. **based upon the supreme mystery…** As *sefirot*, chariots, and pillars emerge, they are all rooted in the four ethereal letters above.

14. **five are four...** These are the five lights that radiated from the upper letter *he*. The five are construed as four with one in the middle, like four creatures carrying a chariot and its rider. Further, the numerical value of *he* is five. The five are construed as four, to correspond to the four corners of the earth—like the four creatures who bear the chariot. The multiplicity of entities is all ultimately contained within the unity of *yod*. Five lights that emerged from *he* are contained within *he*'s pillars; each of the five pillars is contained within *he*; the letter *he* itself is contained within nine pillars; and each of those pillars is contained within *yod*. The fluidity of numerical and other forms of categorization is implicit in this paragraph.

For sefirotic interpretations of this passage, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

15. **twenty-five chariots...** Using a different calculation, each of the five rays of light that flows from the five pillars that support the upper letter *he* is supported by a chariot from below. Each of the pillars contains the undifferentiated five rays within it, yielding a total of twenty-five chariots residing within the lower letter *he*. This sum is denoted by the numerical value of כה (*koh*), *thus*, but in Zoharic Kabbalah this term also alludes to *Shekhinah*. The verse is now interpreted to mean that the *devoted ones* of the verse from Psalms bless *Shekhinah*, who is the divine manifestation of the twenty-five chariots as they proceed from our world to the lower *he* and on to the upper *he*.

The simple meaning of the verse reads: *Your devoted ones* יברכוכה (*yevarekhukhah*), *will bless You*. Here, the last word —which ends with an apparently superfluous letter *he*—is parsed as יברכו כה (*yevarekhu koh*), *will bless koh*.

On *koh* as a name of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:90b, 96a, 152b, 174b; 2:23b, 37b, 79b, 139b; 3:145b–146a, 148a, 264b; *ZḤ* 85d (*MhN, Rut*); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 12a–13a. On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 2:79b, 139b; 3:146a, 264b, 267a; *ZḤ* 85d (*MhN, Rut*). For different

interpretations, see *Ketem Paz*; *Sullam*; Wald, "Commentary," 122; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

16. **nine chariots stand alone…** Nine chariots support the letter *yod*, but they are not included in the larger sum, on account of their obscurity and lack of differentiation.

See above, notes 7–8.

17. **From here onward…** Proceeding from here, the text explains how the other letters of the tetragrammaton issue from the pillars, lights, and chariots that become manifest in the letters *yod* and upper *he*.

18. **The blessed Holy One is called 'One'…** The singularity and unity of the blessed Holy One is absolute, from the most recondite aspect of God that is manifest in the letter *yod* of the tetragrammaton to the most immanent aspect as reflected in the final *he*.

See Wald, "Commentary," 123. On the blessed Holy One's being called One, see *Zohar* 1:33a; 2:134a, 161b; 3:7b, 16b, 56a, 77b, 93b; *ZḤ* 43d, 88c (*MhN, Rut*).

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Thus says YHVH, King of Israel, their Redeemer, YHVH Tseva'ot: I am the first and I am the last, and there is no god but Me*.

19. **holy chariot for the last one…** Celestial beings, signified by *last ones*, serve as a chariot for the final *he* of the tetragrammaton, representing *Shekhinah*. Despite their subordinate status, they are joined as one with *Shekhinah*, who is called אני (*ani*), *I*. They exist from both the divine and sub-divine perspectives.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Who has wrought and achieved, calling the generations from the beginning*? *I, YHVH, the first, and with the last I am He*.

20. **comprise *he*…** The number four is conventionally represented by the fourth letter of the alphabet (*dalet*); and when the four angels join together with *Shekhinah*, who is signified here by "one point," the yield is five, which is conventionally represented by the alphabet's fifth letter

(*he*). Since the letter ד (*dalet*) requires only a small “point” to transform it graphically into ה (*he*), the four angels actualize *Shekhinah* (who, as noted, is represented as a point) within the divine name when they coalesce as a chariot beneath Her. The ‘position’ of the point both above and in the middle of the four angels reflects the non-conventional nature of the *Zohar*’s use of spatial symbolism. Typical of Zoharic style, the symbolism is fluid.

On these four angels, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 4: “Four classes of ministering angels minister and utter praise before the blessed Holy One: the first camp of Michael on His right, the second camp of Gabriel on His left, the third camp of Uriel before Him, and the fourth camp of Raphael behind Him, and the *Shekhinah* of the blessed Holy One is in the center.” See *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:3; *Targum* on Job 25:2; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 46, 188a–b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:10; *Midrash Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 1; *Bahir* 9 (11); *Zohar* 1:97b (*ST*); 3:118b; Bedtime *Shema* liturgy.

On the transformation of *dalet* into *he*, cf. *Zohar* 2:123b; *TZ* 21, 58b.

21. **another *he* below...** The final *he* of the tetragrammaton can become manifest with love from above, or—as here, when dominated by demonic forces—with judgment. The two instances of the letter ה (*he*) in the word אהה (*ahah*), *alas* (or *ah*), symbolize respectively the *sefirot Binah* and *Shekhinah*, who are both associated with the Left Side and Judgment. When they are written adjacent to each other, without the mediation of the letter *vav* as occurs in the tetragrammaton, *Shekhinah* is commandeered by dark forces and is untempered by compassion. When *Shekhinah* is dominated in this way, it is a time to weep (see Ecclesiastes 3:4). The binary formulations of that section of Ecclesiastes are implicitly interpreted as an allusion to the potential duality of *Shekhinah*.

When the word *ahah* is vocalized, the second letter *he* takes a medial dot, which indicates that it is pronounced as

a consonant—that is, strongly aspirated. Thus this word's second *he* is more palpable than the typical final *he*, which is merely a vowel letter.

The *Zohar*'s Book of Enoch, though influenced by the Enoch literature, is not identical with any of its particular volumes. It comprises one of the many books housed in the real or imaginary Zoharic library. On the mystery of *he* in the book of Enoch, see *Zohar* 2:180b. The term *ahah* also occurs with similar meaning in Judges 6:22 and Jeremiah 1:6. On the aspirated *he* in this term, see *Zohar* 2:177a, 179a (both *SdTs*); 3:74b. On the upper and lower *he*s, see *Bahir* 20 (29); *Zohar* 1:17b; 2:177a, 179a (both *SdTs*); 3:74b, 89b; *ZḤ* 82d (*MhN, Rut*). On the *Zohar*'s Book of Enoch, see above, p. 368, n. 140. See Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:158, 163, nn. 60, 61; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 80–83.

The full verse in Daniel reads: *This sentence by decree of the Watchers, this verdict is commanded by the Holy Ones so that all creatures may know that the Most High is sovereign over the realm of humanity, and He gives it to whom He wishes and He may set over it even the lowest of men*. On this passage, see *Ketem Paz*; *Sullam*; Wald, "Commentary," 123–24; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

22. **Wherever Michael... is found...** Above, the point within the *he* was identified with *yod*, but here it signifies the sub-sefirotic realms of angels.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 2:5; *Zohar* 1:101a (*ST*), 143a and Azulai, *Nitsotsei Orot*, ad loc., n. 2.

23. **preceded by *alef*, or by *yod*...** Neither the pairing of *alef* and *he* nor the aspirated *he* necessarily indicate the domination of Judgment: if there is only one *he* preceded by *alef*, or if a *yod* precedes the *he*, goodness is bestowed upon the world—because each of these pairings begins one of the divine names: אהיה (*Ehyeh*), יה (*YH*), or יהוה (*YHVH*). The divine name *YH* likewise has an aspirated *he*—which is represented in writing by a point in the letter's middle—but in this case it does not connote Judgment as it did above (see note 21).

Then Judgment passes away, overwhelmed by Loving-kindness, and the mystery of *he* is redefined, on account of the letters *alef* and *he*.

"*Alef* and *yod*, abiding in this mystery" follows an interpretation of typographic markings in Cremona, V, and later printed editions. An alternative reading would be simply "This abides in this mystery." Cf. Wald, "Translation," 81.

24. **each letter has its own chariot...** Just as the final *he* of the tetragrammaton has a chariot upon which it rides and that is united with it, so does every letter in a sacred name have celestial forces below that support it and are united with it. The simple meaning of the word *tseva'ot* is "forces or armies," and so the compound divine name *YHVH Tseva'ot*—conventionally translated as *Lord of Hosts*—exemplifies the unity of the name associated with its forces.

25. **since this letter is revealed...** Only the final letter *he* of the tetragrammaton has a chariot in the sub-divine world, whereas the other letters are supported by chariots within the divine realm. Even though the angels supporting *Shekhinah* are united with Her, and all four letters of the tetragrammaton constitute a single unity, those celestial beings are not considered to be part of the other letters. Nonetheless, the first three letters of the tetragrammaton—*YHV*—provide blessing below through their influence upon the final *he*. This process occurs "when palaces [or: halls] join with palaces."

He is "smaller" in symbolic stature, not in terms of its written form. See BT *Ḥullin* 60b, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Pazzi: "It is written: *God made the two great lights* (Genesis 1:16), and it is written [in the same verse]: *the greater light... and the lesser light*. The moon said before the blessed Holy One, 'Master of the Universe! Can two kings possibly wear one crown? [i.e., How can both of us be *great?*]' He answered, 'Go, diminish yourself!' She said before Him, 'Master of the Universe! Because I have

suggested something proper I should make myself smaller?' He replied, 'Go and rule by day and night.' She said, 'But what is the value of this? What good is a lamp at noon?'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 6, 51; Naḥmanides on Genesis 1:14; *Zohar* 1:19b–20a, 181a–b; 2:138a, 144b, 147b–148a, 219b; *ZḤ* 69b, 70d–71a (both *ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 189; idem; *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 91; Solomon ben Adret in *Peirushei ha-Haggadot*, on BT *Ḥullin* 60b; Todros Halevi Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod, Ḥullin* 60b, p. 31c; Liebes, "*de Natura dei*," 47–54.

On the letter *he* as more revealed, see BT *Menaḥot* 29b; *Zohar* 2:168b. On palaces joining with palaces, see *Zohar* 2:256b, 259b, 261a, 262a (all *Heikh*).

26. **each and every letter... contains its chariot...** In the hierarchy of letters and chariots, the two metaphors of containment and inscription describe their relationship—each chariot is both contained and inscribed within its respective letter. The tetragrammaton as a whole is the chariot bearing *Ein Sof*.

27. ***he* is twelve...** The mathematical calculations in this paragraph are obscure. *Ketem Paz* explains that the letter *he* is pronounced as if it consists of two *he*s. When spelled out as הא הא (*he alef he alef*), its numerical value is twelve. "The point" signifies the juncture with the upper *sefirot*, probably *Tif'eret*, which together with the twelve yield thirteen. The twelve correspond to twelve spatial boundaries, which in turn are apportioned to each of the four dimensions; the three on each side consist of three segments—upper, center, and lower—yielding nine per side. The point "above" completes the number ten per side on each of the four sides, amounting to a total of forty. These forty correspond to the first forty-two letters of the Torah (after including the "two handles," which refers to the first and last ב of these forty-two letters). This list of letters is often referred to as the Name of Forty-Two (or the Forty-Two-Letter Name of

God), beginning with the *bet* of *Bereshit* and concluding with the *vet* of בהו (*vohu*), *empty* (or *void*), of Genesis 1:2. The concluding sentence emphasizes that various forms of multiplicity—numerical, spatial, divine, and linguistic—all originate in the final *he* of the tetragrammaton, signifying *Shekhinah*.

Alternatively, *he* refers to *Shekhinah*, who comprises twelve camps. With the point above Her, representing *Yesod* as the collection of all the upper *sefirot*, She consists of thirteen. Further, since She stands atop the four sides of the world—each of which manifests the ten *sefirot* below—She is counted as the tenth member for each of those sides.

Rabbinic tradition derives Thirteen Attributes of Mercy from Exodus 34:6–7: *YHVH, YHVH! A compassionate and gracious God, long-suffering, and abounding in kindness and faithfulness, keeping kindness for the thousandth generation, bearing crime, trespass, and sin*…. In Kabbalah, these attributes of mercy are often associated with *Keter*, the realm of total compassion.

"Boundaries" renders תחומין (*teḥumin*); alternatively, "limits, dominions." The phrase here recalls the twelve גבולי אלכסון (*gevulei alakhson*), "diagonal borders" (edges of a cube), mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1. See *Bahir* 64 (95); Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 33:6; idem, "Derashah le-Ḥatunnah," in *Kitvei Ramban* 1:135; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 511–12; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 108–9; *Zohar* 1:35a, 76b, 156a (last two *ST*), 159b, 199a, 241a; 2:2a, 58b, 62b, 64b, 66b, 104b–105a, 229b; 3:78a, 96b, 118b, 134b, 138a (last two *IR*), 148b, 209a; *ZḤ* 55a, 62a, 63d (last two *ShS*); [Moses de León?], *Seder Gan Eden* (in *Beit ha-Midrash* 3:139–40); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 69a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:917, n. 56. For a different interpretation of the mathematical calculations, cf. *Sullam*.

The Name of Forty-Two Letters is mentioned in the name of Rav, though not recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a.

Jacob ben Me'ir Tam (Rabbenu Tam) is the first to suggest that this name consists of the first forty-two letters of the Torah. See Lewin, *Otsar ha-Ge'onim, Ḥagigah*, 23; *Tosafot, Ḥagigah* 11b, s.v. *ein doreshin*; *Zohar* 1:1a, 15b, 30a–b; 2:92b (*Piq*), 130b, 132b, 175b, 187a, 234a–b; 3:78a, 172b; *ZḤ* 38d, 42a, 48a (*MhN, Rut*); Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 2:12; Joseph of Hamadan, "Peirush al Eser Sefirot ha-Meyuḥas le-Rabbi Yosef ha-ba mi-Shushan," 302–3; Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim* 21:12–13; Caro, *Avqat Rokhel*, #27; Lavi, *Ketem Paz* 1:46c–d; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 94–96; Scholem, "Rav Moshe mi-Burgos," 54–61; Schiffman, "A Forty-Two Letter Divine Name"; Idel, "Al ha-Peirushim," 161–62, n. 24; 167–68, n. 52; Vol. 11, p. 77, n. 139. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:62.

This use of the term *sefirot* is rare within the Zoharic corpus before the later strata of *Raya Meheimna* and *Tiqqunei Zohar*. See Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 165; idem, *ZḤ* 1b (*SO*); Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 172; Wald, "Notes," 108–9. Cf. ZḤ 1d (*Mat*).

28. **balancing...** Final *he* maintains equilibrium among the diverse entities under Her aegis.

"Scale of balance" renders טיקלא (*tiqla*), based playfully on the root תקל (*tql*), "to weigh, balance." In the *Zohar, tiqla*'s range of meaning includes "scale; potter's wheel; hollow of the hand; fist; water-clock"; it is most commonly used to refer to the weighing of a soul's merits and transgressions. Usually this scale is said to stand below *Shekhinah*, but here it apparently signifies *Shekhinah* Herself.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Sefer Yetsirah* 3:1; *Zohar* 1:78a, 92b, 109a–110a, 229a, 233b–234a (*Tos*); 2:61b, 95b, 176b (*SdTs*), 252a (*Heikh*); 3:168a; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 178; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 327–35. Cf. Daniel 5:27.

29. **Through this mystery...** All the *sefirot* above imbue and fashion the mystery of *he*, and all sub-divine entities are

formed in its image. The verb from the verse in Genesis is broken up to indicate its deeper meaning: the upper *sefirot* declare their intention to create the letter *he* in their image. *He* can be perceived within the lower entities because they are united with it, as expressed in the meaning of the word הא (*he*), meaning "here" or "behold." However, this susceptibility to vision does not apply to the highest *sefirot* (presumably *Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*), who cannot be apprehended within *he* on account of their transcendence.

30. **point resides in the middle…** Signifying *Ḥokhmah* as it is manifest as a point within *he*, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*. Since *Ḥokhmah* emanates all the lower *sefirot* that are ultimately expressed as *he, he* emerges as the revelation of all. The speaker in the verse from Genesis—אלהים (*Elohim*), *God*—alludes to *Binah*, who begins the process of fashioning the *sefirot* within the tetragrammaton's latter *he*. This structure is the manifestation of *Adam*—the *sefirot* arranged anthropomorphically.

See Wolfson, "Letter Symbolism," 236: "Letters are simultaneously the vehicles which carry the divine spirit and the matrix from which that spirit is formed. In terms of the ancient *merkavah* imagery, letters comprise the nature of both the chariot and charioteer, the supernal man in whose image the human being is said to have been created."

31. **these letters…** This passage summarizes the teachings regarding the letters of the tetragrammaton and especially of its second *he*, which signifies *Shekhinah*. It concludes with a blessing for the one who can truly fathom the esoteric secrets taught thus far.

The phrase "entered and emerged" derives from the famous story of four rabbis who "entered the orchard," that is, who engaged in mystical contemplation. Only Rabbi Akiva "entered in peace and emerged in peace." In the *Zohar*, "entering and emerging" refers to a kabbalist who has entered the realm of mystery and emerged unscathed—

one who has plumbed the secrets and discovered how to endure and apply them in his life. Here this knowing is fraught with danger because of the intimate and transformative nature of mystical consciousness.

On attaining wisdom as a criterion for life in the hereafter, see BT *Shabbat* 31a, in the name of Rava: “When a person is brought to judgment they ask him: Did you conduct business faithfully? Did you designate times for Torah study? Did you engage in procreation? Did you await salvation? Did you engage in the dialectics of wisdom or understand one matter from another?”

עלמא דאתי (*Alma de-atei*) is the Aramaic equivalent of the rabbinic Hebrew העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*), “the world that is coming.” This concept is often understood as referring to the hereafter and is usually translated as “the world to come.” Alternatively, however, “the world that is coming” already exists, occupying another dimension. See *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8: “The wise call it *ha-olam ha-ba* not because it does not exist now, but for us today in this world it is still to come.” See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 8:8; and Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, 37: “‘The world to come’ does not succeed ‘this world’ in time, but exists from eternity as a reality outside and above time, to which the soul ascends.”

In Kabbalah “the world that is coming” often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation. See *Zohar* 3:290b (*IZ*): “the World that is Coming, constantly coming, never ceasing.” Cf. *Bahir* 106 (160); Asher ben David, *Peirush Shelosh Esreh Middot*, in *R. Asher ben David*, 293; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 26 (30); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot*, 375; *Zohar* 1:83a, 92a, 141b.

On entering and emerging in peace, see JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4 (and cf. *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:4; BT *Ḥagigah* 15b); *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 33:21; *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*), 112a (*MhN*); 2:176a, 179a (*SdTs*), 213b; 3:127b, 141a, 144a–b (last

three *IR*), 290a, 292a (last two *IZ*), 297a; *ZḤ* 6c (*SO*), 19a (*MhN*), 105a (*Mat*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 345; Liebes, "Ha-Mashiaḥ shel ha-Zohar," 153–56, and nn. 240–41; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 35, 97, 130–31, 178, nn. 110–11; Wolfson, "Forms of Visionary Ascent," 211–14; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 63–67.

32. **Mystery of ו (*vav*)...** The third letter of the tetragrammaton, *vav*, signifies *Tif'eret* and serves as the chariot supporting the upper *sefirot*, namely *Keter* through *Binah*. In pronouncing the name of the letter *vav*, one utters its associated sound twice—alluding to its duality, facing both upward and downward. Numerically, the two *vav*s equal twelve, corresponding to the twelve diagonal boundaries (see above, note 27) that define the divine parameters. The "upper *vav*" signifies *Tif'eret*, who is infused by Divinity, streaming from the five surrounding *sefirot*—*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*—while supporting *Binah*, who is represented by the first letter *he* (whose numerical value is five) of the tetragrammaton. The lower *vav* may represent *Yesod* as an extension of *Tif'eret*, or *Shekhinah*, who is represented by the second *he* of the divine name—and who comprises six, as well. Thus *vav* has the numerical value of six but supports or infuses the upper and lower letters *he*, each of whose numerical value is five.

For different explanations of this paragraph, see *Ketem Paz*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

33. **right axis...** The letter *vav* consists of three strands: right side, representing *Ḥesed*; left, representing *Gevurah*; and the center, representing *Tif'eret*. Each of these three, in turn, is constituted by three segments. Thus, even though a chariot is normally comprised of four, here each *sefirah* comprises a triad. This arrangement is modeled after the tetragrammaton, which contains only three distinct letters: י (*yod*), ה (*he*), and ו (*vav*). The exclusion of the fourth side, alluding to *Shekhinah*, can also be explained by reference to

Shekhinah's lack of a distinctive contribution of Her own, functioning essentially as a recipient of the upper overflow.

Here *Ḥesed* is symbolized by the primordial light, created on the first of the six days of creation. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:2, 6; 41:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7; BT *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:1; *Tanḥuma, Shemini*, 9; *Midrash Tehillim* 27:1; *Bahir* 17 (25), 97–98 (147), 106 (160), 131 (190); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 494; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 109–10; *Zohar* 1:1a, 7a, 16b, 21a, 30b, 31b–32a, 45b–46a, 47a, 59a, 121b (*MhN*), 131a, 203b; 2:35a, 78b, 127a, 147b, 148b–149a, 166b–167a, 220a–b, 224b, 230a; 3:34a–b, 88a, 93a, 225b, 231b, 245b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 1a, 15a (*MhN*), 37d, 66a (*ShS*), 122a (*Mat*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 183; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 31 (37); idem, *Sefer Mishkan ha-Edut*, 140; Recanati on Genesis 1:3, 3b–4c.

On the significance of threes, see above, note 27.

34. **Letter *he*...** After emphasizing the pervasiveness of threes, this paragraph returns parenthetically to the final letter *he* of the tetragrammaton. Although it abides within the four archangels below, that *he* can also be construed as being comprised of four because it receives from the three primary strands of right, left, and center. Alternatively, each of the angels below it is accompanied by two others, so that the paradigm of triads is universal both above and below.

On the four angels supporting the final *he*, see above, pages 377–78 and note 20.

35. **Chariot of the south side...** Signifying *Ḥesed*. This chariot encompasses three strands emerging from *Binah*, symbolized by the lamp, above. Twelve aromas flow upward to *Binah*, where their fragrance is paradoxically both present and absent—depending upon whether one's perspective is from above or below. (Differentiation in the higher *sefirot* is imperceptible from below, though the potential for distinction can be perceived from above.) The southern chariot has absorbed undifferentiated light from *Binah*.

Rabbi Shim’on explains that there is a threefold distinction of colors even as he denies apophatically the colors’ relationship to their respective elements: water, fire, wind (or spirit, air). Each of these three becomes both actualized in its own identity and subsumed within the larger structure of the chariot of the right side.

Both “wind” and “air” render רוח (*ru’aḥ*). On the paradox of unity and differentiation here, see *Ketem Paz;* Wald, “Commentary,” 126–28.

36. **epithets…** Rabbinic tradition enumerates certain especially holy divine names “that may not be erased.” In the Kabbalah, ten of these names are distributed among the ten *sefirot*. In addition to these proper names, there are “epithets” (or “appellations, descriptive terms, cognomens”), such as “Great” and “Strong,” which are related to specific names. The text proceeds to expound the epithets that correspond to the three lines emerging from each of the three primary divine strands contained within the letter *vav*. Ultimately, they all derive from the essential Divine Name, the tetragrammaton.

For various lists of the ten names, see JT *Megillah* 1:8, 71d; BT *Shevu’ot* 35a; *Soferim* 4:1–2; *Sefer Torah* 4:1–2; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 34; *Zohar* 3:10b–11a. Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah*, 6:1–6. The notion that all names and epithets are branches from the tetragrammaton is the primary trope that informs Joseph Gikatilla’s *Sha’arei Orah*. For a concise statement, see ibid., 2a. On the erasure of names and epithets, see ibid., 47a, 52a–b.

37. **אל (*El*), and its chariot…** The line on the right, identified with *Ḥesed* and the divine name *El*, becomes manifest in three colors, which form a unified support called Great. Each of those three also has a distinct identity as expressions of the right, left, and center dimensions emerging from *Ḥesed*. These dimensions (called “colors”) are correlated with the epithets Great, Strong, and Holy,

respectively. Each of them in turn comprises three, yielding a total of nine, all of which support the divine name *El*—for a total of ten entities on the right side. “Large” and “small” *sefirot* apparently correspond to the three colors that emerge from the divine name, and to the subsequent set of three emanating from them, respectively.

On *El* as signifying *Ḥesed*, see *Zohar* 1:16b, 17b, 94a; 3:11a, 23b, 30b–31a, 65a; Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 76b–78b. Cf. *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:2; *ZḤ* 30c. On the epithet *Gadol* as associated with *Ḥesed*, see *Zohar* 1:19a, 116b; 2:53b, 261a (*Heikh*); 3:23b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 32–33 (38–39).

The names and epithets stemming from the three colors in the forthcoming lists are identical to those in Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 53a. See ibid., 59b; idem, *Sha’arei Tsedeq*, 21a; Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 97–98, n. 6.

38. **Two emerge from one color…** Specified here are the additional epithets that emerge from each of the three colors. In the color on the right, in addition to *Gadol*, are *Ḥannun* and *Raḥum*. In the color on the left, in addition to *Ḥasin*, are *Erekh Appayim* and *Rav Ḥesed*. In the color in the middle, in addition to *Qadosh*, are *Ḥasid* and *Solei’aḥ*.

The *Zohar*’s Book of Enoch, though influenced by the Enoch literature, is not identical with any of its particular volumes. It comprises one of the many books housed in the real or imaginary Zoharic library. See above, p. 368, n. 140.

These attributes are derived from Exodus 34:6–7 (quoted above, note 27), in which the first phrase after the doubled tetragrammaton is אל רחום וחנון (*El raḥum ve-ḥannun*), *God compassionate and gracious*. See Vol. 5, pp. 524–25, nn. 952–53; p. 549, n. 10. On the association of these names with the right side, see Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 54b.

39. **lights branch off below…** There is a continuing concatenation of divine influence flowing downward, but since these epithets are beyond the name *El*, they are not

united with the *sefirot* above. Nonetheless, in the broadest sense they are all part of the mystery of *vav*.

40. **Commencement on the left axis…** Here begins the description of the emanation from the left side of the letter *vav*. The *sefirah* on the left side is *Gevurah*, source of Judgment, and it is the place from which Hell and demonic forces originate. They are alluded to with the euphemistic term "that side."

On the image of blazing fire, see *Zohar* 1:16a. This designation apparently derives from Maimonides (*Guide of the Perplexed* 2:30), who identifies the *darkness* of Genesis 1:2 with "elemental fire": "The elemental fire was designated by this term [*darkness*] because it is not luminous, but only transparent." See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 111; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 124.

41. **glow shimmers toward the darkness…** The "Lamp," signifying *Binah*, shines a beam toward *Ḥesed* to mitigate the severity of the fiery judgments of the left side. Then luminosity flows toward the left, limiting its harshness. While the chariot for the right side emerged autonomously, it is only through the intervention of the right that three strands are issued to support the left.

See *Sullam*; Wald, "Commentary," 135; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

42. **another spirit emanates…** After being primed by the line on the right, another emanation—רוחא (*ruḥa*), "spirit" (or "wind, breeze")—causes the procession of three colors that will serve as chariot for the left side. This is the only one of the three axes that does not aromatize from below, on account of its being the side of Judgment. The names of the three colors are "gloom," "red," and "black"—corresponding to the right, left, and middle strands of the left side. Each of them, in turn, is accompanied by a further pair of lights, yielding a total of nine on the left overall, as was the case with the right side.

In the Kabbalah, North is associated with Judgment and Evil. The original impetus derives from Jeremiah 1:14: *From the north, evil will be let loose* [literally: *opens*] *on all the inhabitants of the land*.

See *Bahir* 109 (162): "What is [this attribute]? It is the Satan. This teaches us that the blessed Holy One has an attribute whose name is Evil; and it is to the north of the blessed Holy One, as is written: *From the north, evil opens* [*on all the inhabitants of the land*] (Jeremiah 1:14). That is to say, any evil that comes to *any of the inhabitants of the land*, comes from the north."

For a different reading, see Wald, "Translation," 85.

43. **One color...** This is the reading in O2, N23, and the printed editions, whereas V21 (the most reliable manuscript) reads "Another color." (The difference results from the substitution of one similar-shaped letter.)

44. **These are the epithets...** In addition to the three colors supporting the left side of the letter *vav* in the tetragrammaton, there are also three epithets associated with it: *Adir, Ḥazaq*, and *Gibbor*. *Elohim* is the divine name identified with the left side, symbolizing *Gevurah*, but it is also used in Kabbalah to signify *Binah* and *Shekhinah*, since all three *sefirot* manifest judgment.

For different assignations of right, middle, and left to these epithets, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

45. **every one of these three colors splits into two...** As noted above (note 42), each of the three colors that form a chariot for the left side is itself split into three, yielding a total of nine. Together with *Gevurah* over them all, the sum is ten. As with the right side, the ten *sefirot* are manifest here on the left side as well.

46. **Two emerge from within the color...** Each of the three colors that branch out on the left emits two more potencies, as described. Those forces are identified here with scriptural terms of judgment.

47. **innumerable גבורן (*gevuran*), powers...** From the nine lines that issue from the left side. The intended impression is of an endless procession of emanations that manifest judgments that derive from *Gevurah*, ultimately originating in *vav* of the tetragrammaton. Indeed, each letter of the tetragrammaton is the source for, and is supported by, a concatenation of names, chariots, and epithets that abide within the hierarchy of the letter *vav*.

On *gevuran*, see *Zohar* 2:83a; 3:21b, 31b, 38a, 48b, 60a, 137b, 138b, 141a, 142a (last four *IR*), 296a (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 2a (*Mat*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:83a; 3:24a.

48. **whoever comes to unite the Holy Name...** The entire preceding discourse is not merely theoretical knowledge; rather, it is crucial for kabbalists who seek to perform mystical unifications with the Divine Name through the recitation of the *Shema*.

49. **Commencement on the middle axis...** This middle "axis" (or "side, realm, dimension") corresponds to the aspect of *Tif'eret* inhering in the letter *vav* of the tetragrammaton. Standing in the middle, it fastens together and harmonizes the influences from the right side of Loving-kindness and left side of Judgment, thus manifesting the consummate balance of all six *sefirot* that abide symbolically within *vav*.

In the *Zohar, Tif'eret* is often signified by Jacob, who is characterized in *Targum Onqelos* on Genesis 25:27 as *gevar shelim*, "a consummate [or: perfect, complete] man." *Vav* has the numerical value of six, and *Tif'eret* stands for the middle six *sefirot*: *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. When they are all properly arrayed, *Tif'eret* conveys twelve aromas that abide in *Shekhinah* upward toward *Binah*, actualizing the unity of the entire sefirotic structure. Like the right side, and in contrast with the left, the middle axis emits sweet fragrances.

On Jacob as consummate, see *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 8:7, 112c; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 31, 312; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:5;

BT *Pesaḥim* 56a; *Zohar* 1:146a, 147b (*ST*), 167b, 173b, 222a; 2:78b, 175b; 3:12b, 163a–b.

50. **branches off into three colors…** As the right and left sides of the letter *vav* ramify their own three colors, spreading out on their respective sides of right and left, so too does the middle axis issue three colors, disseminating on the right and left. Following the pattern above, these three colors comprise the chariot that supports the letter *vav* below—as an expression of the *vav* that becomes manifest in the essential inscribing of the tetragrammaton above.

51. **These are the epithets…** A series of appellations follow that designate divine activities that correspond to the middle axis. Since it occupies the center position, the letter *vav* conveys the light, colors, and activities deriving from the letters יהו (*YHV*), corresponding to the *sefirot Keter* through *Yesod*. Ultimately, *vav* is the junction of the entire name *YHVH*, including *yod* and *he* above it, and the second *he* below, as well as the powers of Love on the right and Judgment on the left.

The three letters *yod, he, vav* often signify the *sefirot* from *Keter* through *Yesod*, according to the following scheme: The initial letter, *yod*, symbolizes the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, while its upper stroke symbolizes *Keter*. The *he*, often a feminine marker, symbolizes the Divine Mother, *Binah*. The *vav*, whose numerical value is six, symbolizes *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). The second *he* represents *Shekhinah*, completion of the *sefirot*.

52. **its chariot is called 'Awesome'…** The middle line of *vav* is supported by a chariot, characterized as three sides (right, left, middle) bearing the respective epithets Awesome, Truth, and Keeping Kindness. Each of those three signifies a color, which in turn differentiates into three. Those nine plus the tetragrammaton presiding over them total the number ten—a concatenation of perfected paradigms.

53. **ten *sefirot*...** Each stage of emanation reflects an aspect of the totality of Divinity, depicted as ten *sefirot*; and the procession of these gradations is infinite.

On the "ten utterances," see M *Avot* 5:1: "By ten utterances the world was created." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:1; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 32a, *Megillah* 21b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21, 108a–b (and Ish Shalom's n. 138); 40, 169a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; B, 36; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3 (and Luria's n. 73); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 506; *Zohar* 1:16b, 30a; 2:14b (*MhN*), 34b, 67a, 75b, 156b, 169b, 178b (*SdTs*), 200a; 3:11b–12a, 73a; *ZḤ* 89a (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Sefer ha-Bahir* 96 (141–46).

54. **all these chariots...** Referring to the totality of all the chariots of the entire structure. If they are on the right side, they are ruled by the divine name *El* and manifest the letter *yod* below. If they are on the left side, they are ruled by the divine name *Elohim* above and manifest the letter *he* below. If they are on the middle axis, they are ruled by the divine name *YHVH* above and manifest the letter *vav* below.

This interpretation follows *Sullam* and *Matoq mi-Devash*.

55. **Two radiate from a single point...** Each of the epithets heads a triplet of divine strands, completing a pattern of triplets throughout the structure. Thus the epithet "Awesome" is both the generic name of the chariot supporting the right side of the middle axis of the letter *vav* (associated with water) and the particular name of that chariot's middle flank. "Awesome" is accompanied by the appellations "Bearing Crime" on its right and "Overlooking Trespass" on its left. On the left side of that chariot—which is associated with fire—"Truth" stands in the middle, with "Height" on its right side and "High Place" on its left.

The name "Overlooking Trespass" derives from Proverbs 19:11; the term "Trespass" alone is in the listing

of thirteen attributes in Exodus 34:6–7 (quoted above, note 27).

56. **comprised within the mystery of World that is Coming…** According to the *Zohar*'s Book of Enoch, the epithets "Height" and "High Place" actually derive from *Binah*, signified by World that is Coming, where the differentiated left side begins. This seemingly poses a challenge—since "On High" is normally associated with *YHVH*, the name symbolizing *Tif'eret*. The explanation is that *Binah*—whether signified by the name *Elohim* or one of its epithets—inheres in all divine manifestations on the left side.

On the *Zohar*'s Book of Enoch, see above, p. 368, n. 140. On "Examines Hearts," see Psalms 7:10; Proverbs 17:3.

57. **Third color…** Referring to the central strand of the middle axis of the letter *vav*, whose epithet is "Keeping Kindness." The two epithets on its right and left sides are "Dwells Forever" and "Holy," respectively.

"Dwells Forever" and "Holy" derive from Isaiah 57:15: *For thus said He who high aloft forever dwells, whose name is holy: I dwell on high, in holiness*.

58. **stream outward…** Here begins a description of a new stage of the sefirotic structure, detailing the characteristics of *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*. This triad emerges from the upper triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, and it is arrayed according to three axes of right, left, and center. Its members are called "external" since they are lower. However, *Yesod* (corresponding to the divine phallus) is not fully relegated to this external status, since it is considered to be an extension of the divine torso above. These three, together with the upper three, are all enfolded within the unity of the letter *vav*, whose numerical value is six. The treatment of these lower *sefirot* is not as developed as the descriptions of those preceding.

On the relationship of *Yesod* to the divine body, see *Zohar* 1:149b, 153b–154a, 158a, 162b, 246b; 2:224a, 225a, 258b, 259b (last two *Heikh*); 3:6a, 53b, 66b.

59. **not called by distinctive names…** The divine names—"chariots"—associated with *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod* are all derivative of names that signify *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. Thus, *Netsaḥ* is called *YHVH Tseva'ot, Hod* is called *Elohim Tseva'ot*, and *Yesod* is called *El Shaddai*. (Usually, *YHVH* symbolizes *Tif'eret*; *Elohim* signifies *Binah* and *Gevurah*; and *El* represents *Ḥesed*.)

60. **two columns…** *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are commonly depicted as pillars or legs supporting the divine anthropos. They are the sources of prophetic vision. Their names—*YHVH Tseva'ot* ("Lord of Hosts") and *Elohim Tseva'ot* ("God of Hosts")—indicate that forces (*tseva'ot*) below them fulfill their injunctions. They convey divine love to *Shekhinah*, signified by "David."

On *acts of love for David*, see *Zohar* 1:8a, 219a; 2:169a; 3:21a, 40b, 262b; *ZḤ* 64a (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 48 (59).

On *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* as the sources of prophecy, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 49, 78; *Zohar* 1:12b (*Mat*), 21b, 151b (*Tos*), 251b (*Mat, Hash*); 2:111b, 170a, 257b, 261b (last two *Heikh*); 3:35a, 36a, 61a, 90b, 91b; *ZḤ* 27d, 45b–c; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 337; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 47–48 (57–59); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 378–79. Cf. Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 50:4.

61. **From there, actions branch out…** Indicating that *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* manifest the positive influences from above in the revealed world below.

It is significant that *Ḥesed* and *Tif'eret*—aligned with the right and left lines—are alluded to (via the epithets *Great, Compassions*, and *Kindnesses*), even though it is *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* that are normally affiliated with the right and left. No explanation is offered for the apparent discrepancy. Cf. *Matoq mi-Devash*.

62. **supports for the Torah…** Supporting *Tif'eret*. The names and epithets were uttered by King David in 1 Chronicles 29:11: *Yours, O YHVH, are* והתפארת והנצח וההוד הגדולה והגבורה (*ha-gedullah ve-ha-gevurah ve-ha-tif'eret ve-ha-netsaḥ ve-ha-hod*), *the greatness and the power and the beauty and the victory and the splendor—yes, all that is in heaven and on earth*.

Quoted often in kabbalistic literature, this list of divine qualities is understood as designating *Ḥesed* (also called *Gedullah*), *Gevurah, Tif'eret, Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod* (known as *all*), and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *earth*), who is joined with *Tif'eret* (*heaven*). All of these "belong" to *YHVH*, which here refers to *Binah* (or the triad of *Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*). See *Zohar* 1:235b, 241a–b; 2:40b, 178b (*SdTs*); 3:24a, 89b, 92a, 148a.

On *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* as supports of the Torah, see *Zohar* 1:8a; 3:35a, 90b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 48 (59).

63. **why may they be erased?…** The names *El, Elohim*, and *YHVH*—which correspond to *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*—are all like garments or husks for the supreme (or upper) "soul," alluding to *Binah*. This accounts for the prohibition against erasing them. Epithets such as "Great" or "Mighty" are like external casings for those names. While still representing the supreme soul, they are sufficiently removed from Divinity's essential purity that they may be erased. However, while these epithets do not possess Divinity themselves, they still may not be erased from a scroll of the Torah.

Historically, Rav Hamnuna Sava (the Elder) was a Babylonian teacher who lived in the mid-third century. Generally in the *Zohar*, Rav Hamnuna Sava appears as a contemporary of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai (who lived in the second century). In the Talmud, Rav Hamnuna occasionally transmits teachings of Rabbi Shim'on (e.g., BT *Ḥullin* 81a, *Temurah* 15a), and several prayers and blessings are attributed to him (BT *Berakhot* 11b, 17a,

58a). In the *Zohar*, roles are reversed and Rabbi Shim'on cites Rav Hamnuna. Throughout the *Zohar*, Hamnuna is greatly revered, and several original ritual acts are attributed to him; the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava is cited frequently as well.

On the prohibition against erasing divine names, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 61, in the name of Rabbi Yishma'el: "From where do we know that erasing a single letter from the Name violates a prohibition? As is said, *You shall obliterate their name from that place. You shall not do thus to YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 12:3–4)." See BT *Makkot* 22a, *Menaḥot* 30b, *Sefer Torah* 4:1–2; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 7, p. 140; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah*, 6:1–6; Caro, *Shulḥan Arukh, Yoreh De'ah* 276:9–10.

On erasing epithets, see BT *Shevu'ot* 35a (according to the emendation of the Vilna Gaon): "There are Names that may be erased; and there are Names that may not be erased. These are the Names that may not be erased: such as *El, Eloha, Elohim, Eloheikha, Ehyeh asher Ehyeh, Alef Dalet, Yod He, Shaddai, Tseva'ot*—these may not be erased. But the Great, the Mighty, the Awesome, the Majestic, the Strong, the Powerful, the Potent, the Merciful and Gracious, the Long Suffering, the One Abounding in Kindness—these may be erased."

64. **final shell...** Rabbi Shim'on details precisely the relationship between divine names and epithets by clarifying that *Shekhinah*, as represented by the final letter *he* of the tetragrammaton, is subordinate to (and symbolized as having erotic relations with) the divine names that are associated with the other *sefirot*—but not to their epithets. In the divine hierarchy, all epithets stand beyond the boundary of Divinity itself. Thus, when *Shekhinah* is erotically bonded with *Tif'eret*, all the epithets protect the privacy of their intimacy from the outside, like a robe or blanket.

My wings renders כנפי (*kenafay*), though the simple sense vocalizes the word as *kenafi, my wing*, in the singular. Similarly *your wings* renders כנפיך (*khenafekha*) according to some of the older manuscripts, though MT reads כנפך (*khenafekha*), in the singular. In the context of each of these two cases, the simple meaning of the root *knf* is *robe, garment*, or the *hem of a robe*; and the act of a man spreading his garment over a woman can indicate an act of espousal, as in Deuteronomy 23:1. The context in Ruth reads: *I am Ruth, your handmaid. Spread your robe over your handmaid, for you are a redeemer* [or: *a redeeming kinsman*]. See *Targum*, which reads: "Let your name be called over your maidservant, by taking me to wife…," incorporating several of the themes developed here in *Sitrei Otiyyot*.

On *khenafekha*, see *Rut Rabbah* 6:1; Rashi; Rashbam; Ibn Ezra; Sasson, *Ruth*; Eskenazi/Frymer-Kensky, *Ruth*. Cf. Ruth 2:12.

65. **they are inside and they are outside…** The upper divine names (representing *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*) are internal in relation to *Shekhinah*, but external in relation to names associated with *Binah* and above. *Shekhinah* is internal in relation to the epithets, but external in relation to the upper divine names. The epithets are internal in relation to sub-divine entities, but external in relation to *Shekhinah*. Thus all the divine names, *Shekhinah*, and epithets do not have fixed identities as external or internal, but rather their status is defined performatively—in terms of their role.

The antecedents in the first two lines are obscure, and this translation follows the standard edition. O2, N23, and V read: "Consequently, they are outside and She is inside; She is outside and She is inside." According to *Sullam* this means that the epithets are external to *Shekhinah* and She is internal to them. *Shekhinah* is internal to the epithets, but external to the upper divine names.

66. ***For the ways of YHVH are right*** The verse concludes: *the righteous walk in them, while transgressors stumble in them*. The holy kabbalists understand all the secrets of God's names and epithets; and in their mystical contemplation of the divine realm, they proceed with perfected discernment.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, in the name of Rabbi Yose: "Woe to creatures, for they see but do not know what they see; they stand but do not know on what they stand!" On the verse from Hosea, see *Zohar* 1:75b, 167b, 204a; 2:102b; 3:77b, 144a, 151b; *ZḤ* 73a (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 189–90, 220; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 77.

67. **Spring of the well...** Here begins the description of the *sefirah Yesod* as it appears in the letter ו (*vav*) of the tetragrammaton. The "spring" signifies *Yesod*, ever-flowing into the well, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. The *sefirot Ḥesed* through *Hod* all coalesce within the spring to facilitate the erotic conjugation of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, characterized as brightening the face and saturating the garden.

68. **no chariot...** The divine intimacy occurs with modest obscuration and murmurs, without explicit reference to surrounding supports. The epithets cloak the lovers, ensuring their privacy. When conjugal union has been attained, the totality of the sefirotic structure is called Well—since the upper *sefirot*, signified by *princes*, hewed the Well and contribute to the *living waters* that fill Her.

The phrase *a well of living waters* also appears in Song of Songs 4:15.

69. **sealed from that well...** Initially, the well—alluding to *Shekhinah*—is sealed and needs to be prepared for eternal union through penetration by the phallic member, *Yesod*, signified by "spring."

The description here may be drawing on the imagery of Song of Songs 4:12: *A locked garden is my sister bride; a locked fountain, a sealed spring*." See also BT *Sanhedrin* 22b, in the name of Rav: "A woman [before marriage] is a

shapeless lump, and concludes a covenant only with him who transforms her into a [useful] vessel, as is written: *For He who espouses you, makes you—His name is YHVH Tseva'ot* (Isaiah 54:5)."

For a different explanation, see *Sullam*.

70. ***he* bears a single point...** When divine overflow—whether from *Keter*, represented by *alef*, or from *Ḥokhmah*, symbolized by *yod*—shines into the final *he* of the tetragrammaton, alluding to *Shekhinah*, the *he* is aspirated and is written with a dot in its middle to signify consummation. This completion alludes to the union of male and female divine potencies, as represented by the erotically intertwined male and female cherubim in the Holy of Holies in the Temple.

See Exodus 25:20: *The cherubim shall be spreading wings above, sheltering the cover with their wings, and their faces toward each other, toward the cover the faces of the cherubim shall be*. The image of their wings spreading and sheltering the cover echoes the imagery above. See note 64.

In the *Zohar*, the Holy of Holies can signify either *Binah* or *Shekhinah*, and here it appears that *Shekhinah* is fulfilled in intercourse with *Yesod*, whose flow originates in the top three *sefirot* that culminate in *Binah*. Thus *Shekhinah* attains full actualization as She is marked with the "point" that originates above in the Holy of Holies.

See BT *Yoma* 54a, in the name of Rabbi Katina: "When Israel ascended [to Jerusalem annually] for the Festival, the curtain would be rolled open for them and the cherubim revealed, their bodies intertwined. They [the people] would be addressed: 'Look! God's love for you resembles the love of male and female.'" See 1 Kings 6:23–28; 2 Chronicles 3:10–13; BT *Bava Batra* 99a; *Zohar* 2:152b, 277b; 3:59b; *ZḤ* 43c, 63d (*ShS*); Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 33, 50–51, 103.

On the Holy of Holies as the innermost palace and its relationship to *Shekhinah* and *Binah*, see *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*); 2:257b, 258b (both *Heikh*). On Holy of Holies as *Binah*, see 1:206b; 2:4a, 239b.

71. **mystery of Her invocation…** The letter *he* in its actualized form is uttered when it is joined to the guttural letter *alef* or draws upon breath that originates in the throat, called Holy of Holies, and symbolizing *Binah*. The great voice is paradoxically described as inaudible since it derives from this more recondite domain of Divinity. Alternatively, since the *he* is not vocalized in the throat, it does not derive from actual breath. When *Shekhinah* has been consummated in the written and oral forms of the accented *he*, the four letters of God's name—either אהיה (*Ehyeh*) or יהוה (*YHVH*)—are fully united.

On *Binah* as the "great [or: mighty] voice," see Deuteronomy 5:19; Ezekiel 3:12; *Zohar* 1:50b, 147b (*ST*), 237a; 2:81a–b, 226b; 3:6b, 261a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 353; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 89 (113). For different interpretations of this paragraph, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

72. **When the spring bores into that point…** Upon the conjugal union of *Yesod*, represented by the "spring," and *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the "point," divine overflow from all the other *sefirot* above gush into Her, unencumbered by extraneous "clothing"—apparently referring to the epithets.

On removing one's clothing during intercourse, see Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 46a: "Sometimes the king isolates himself from all the members of the household with none of them remaining with him other than the queen alone. Then the king is unashamed to remove his clothes before the queen…." See *Zohar* 3:28a (*RM*); *TZ* 58, 92a; 66, 98a; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 49b. On holy garments, see Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 125; cf. ibid., 344–46; idem, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 202.

See BT *Ketubbot* 48a, in the name of Rav Yosef: "*Her flesh* (Exodus 21:10) implies close bodily contact—that he must not treat her in the manner of the Persians, who have sexual relations while clothed. This provides support for Rav Huna, who ruled that a husband who said 'I will not [perform conjugal duties] unless I am clothed and so is she,' must divorce her and give her also her *ketubbah*." Cf. BT *Nedarim* 20b.

73. **wick for illumination…** Although the blessed Holy One is prepared for unmediated intimacy with *Shekhinah*, He withdraws if the people of Israel have been impious. Israel is like the wick of the lamp that would illuminate *Shekhinah*; if the wick is improper, then the lamp cannot be lit.

On wicks that are unfit for ritual use, see M *Shabbat* 2.

74. ***bathed my feet…*** Signifying the removal of the defiling influence of the *Sitra Aḥra* upon the Temple, alluding to *Shekhinah*. Rabbi Shim'on reinterprets the bedtime rituals of the Song of Songs as preparation for reunification of the lovers *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*; but when the people of Israel are not fit, He considers restoring the previous impurity.

75. **spirit of impurity passes…** Ultimately, the purity of the world depends upon Israel's turning toward God.

76. **then everything is illuminated…** The concealed intimacy of love is revealed as the world's illumination. Meanwhile, the epithets—previously represented as garments that had prevented close contact—now serve to protect the privacy of the blessed Holy One and *Shekhinah*.

The metaphors of garments and epithets serve two purposes: demonstrating God's withdrawal from the people of Israel on the one hand, and the adornment of the people of Israel with beautiful raiments on the other. See Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 52a–b: "Know that even though we say that the holy names clothe and cover God, this has two meanings—that *YHVH*, may He be blessed, clothes Himself in them alone when He distances Himself from the Assembly of Israel. This is the catastrophe, exile, and the great

calamity—cause of the barrier of shells between Israel and their Father in heaven. But when *YHVH* has chosen Israel and Jerusalem, and has united with Assembly of Israel, there is no foreigner with them in the house—nor all those holy names and epithets that hover around them, and the archons beyond—while *YHVH*, may He be blessed, and Assembly of Israel are within.... In any event, understand that *YHVH*, may He be blessed, sheds those garments in order to unite with Assembly of Israel. But He does not cast those garments out of the world, since they are a great necessity for His actions, as is said: *Spread your robe over your handmaid, for you are a redeemer* (Ruth 3:9)—therefore they may not be erased."

77. **fine membranes of the nut...** The nut is a common symbol in Kabbalah for representing Divinity, since it has a hard outer shell that conceals and protects its fruit inside. Here the thin peel that covers the kernel, and which is not harmful if eaten, alludes to the epithets. The hard shell represents the impurity that God purges from the Temple, ultimately destroying it forever. At that point, knowledge of the blessed Holy One is purified of dross.

The passage concludes with praise for kabbalists, who are forever seeking to understand the deepest knowledge of Divinity. They will be rewarded both in this world and the world that is coming.

In the book of Daniel, *the enlightened* apparently designates the community of those who shared the prophet's vision. In medieval literature, it can refer to either philosophers or, as here, to kabbalists. In certain sections of the *Zohar*, this verse serves performative and experiential functions, inviting the reader to imagine him or herself as *the enlightened* who *will shine like the radiance of the sky*. On these uses of biblical verses, see Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 229–51.

On the image of the nut, see above, note 4. On the verse from Daniel, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4; Ibn Ezra on

Exodus 34:29; *Zohar* 1:15a–16a, 100a (*ST*); 2:2a, 23a; *ZḤ* 58c (*QhM*), 93d–94b, 103b–105a (last two *Tiq*), 105a (*Mat*), 105c–106c (*Tiq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 216; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 224; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 379, 383–84; Liebes, "Zohar ve-Eros," 73–76; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 75–80, 237–38; Huss, *The Zohar: Reception and Impact*, 52–53.

On the world that is coming, see above, note 31.

78. **Image of the letters…** Here *Sitrei Otiyyot* embarks on a discussion of the forms of the four letters of the tetragrammaton, beginning with the final letter *he*. In addition to the Temple as a symbol for that *he*, Moon likewise represents *Shekhinah*. In Kabbalah, the sun and moon typically represent the *sefirot Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, with the latter receiving the light of the former. *Shekhinah* is surrounded by four angels: Raphael in back, Uriel in front, Michael on the right, and Gabriel on the left.

Beneath the four archangels are seventy-two angels, approximating the number of members of the Sanhedrin. The earthly Sanhedrin consisted of seventy-one members (seventy and the presiding officer), while the number seventy-two may allude to seventy members plus two scribes. The angels aggregate to enhance *Shekhinah*'s receptivity toward the loving embrace of Her Husband, *Tif'eret*.

On the arrangement of the archangels, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:3; *Targum* on Job 25:2; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 46, 188a–b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:10; *Midrash Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eliezer* 4; *Bahir* 9 (11); *Zohar* 1:97b (*ST*); 3:118b; Bedtime *Shema* liturgy.

On the number and arrangement of the Sanhedrin, see M *Sanhedrin* 4:3: "The Sanhedrin was arranged like half of a circular threshing-floor, so that they could see one another. Before them stood two scribes of the judges, one on the right and one on the left." See *Targum* on Song of Songs 7:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:3; Naḥmanides on

Numbers 11:16; *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*), 229a; 2:6a, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:236b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 61d (*ShS*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:51b. On this passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:404.

79. **that point absorbing light…** *Shekhinah* is depicted as a crescent moon with a point in the middle, and that composite figure is the receptacle (or womb) for the sun's illumination, representing conjugal union.

In Zoharic Kabbalah, the "point" often signifies the male *sefirah Ḥokhmah*, but it can also symbolize the feminine *Shekhinah*—as it does here, reflecting the doctrine of the twofold *Ḥokhmah*. On *Shekhinah* as a point, see *Zohar* 1:6a; 2:200a, 204a–b, 222b, 242b; 3:250a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110–11; Gikatilla, cited in Elijah de Vidas, *Reshit Ḥokhmah, Sha'ar ha-Qedushah*, 2; Wolfson, *Luminal Darkness*, 152–55.

80. **point… in part of the eye…** The dark pupil of the eye is like the unseen point within the moon: both pupil and the moon's unseen point receive light for actualization.

81. **Every circle…** When drawing a circle with a compass, one of its legs stands fixed at the center while the other circumscribes the shape around it. Thus the relationship of *Shekhinah* to *Tif'eret* is mirrored in all circles.

82. **She is not a half…** Turning from the lunar imagery to orthography, *Sitrei Otiyyot* explains that one side of the letter *he* is joined to its top stroke, and thus shaped like a crescent moon before receiving illumination, while the other side has an opening, to indicate Her readiness for divine influx from the sun. The name of the letter itself, הא (*he*), "I am ready," indicates this preparedness. See above, note 10.

83. **מם (*mem*)… Moon in its fullness…** When Moon is open and receives the influx of divine overflow from the *sefirot* above (represented by the letter *he*), She becomes full Moon and is symbolized by final *mem*, which is closed on all sides—representing the recondite quality of being in the upper world known as *Binah*. Phonetically and graphically,

these letters express the same teaching: ה (*he*) ends with an open mouth, with orthographic openings on the side and below, whereas ם (final *mem*) concludes with the mouth closed and is orthographically closed.

The description of the circular Moon, signifying *Shekhinah*, as being assimilated into the square shape of the letter ם (final *mem*), often symbolizing *Binah*, alludes to the kabbalistic use of the image of the circle in the square—an image that is used to characterize a binary pair as a unity. See BT *Eruvin* 76a–b; *Bahir* 83 (114–16); *Zohar* 2:180a; *ZḤ* 57a–b, 57d–58a, 58c (all *QhM*); Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 62; Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 188.

On final *mem* as symbolizing *Binah*, see *Zohar* 1:34b; 2:127a–b, 135a, 180a; 3:66b, 156b, 285b; *ZḤ* 38c, 41d, 72b–d (*ShS*).

This is the only instance in the Bible that a final ם (*mem*) appears out of place, before the end of the word—a peculiarity that stimulated the rabbinic mind. This anomaly is best understood as a *Qere/Ketiv*, in which the *Ketiv* is two words: לם רבה, while the *Qere* is one word: *le-marbeh*. See BT *Sanhedrin* 94a; *Soferim* 7:3; *Midrash Ḥaserot vi-Yterot* 185 (*Battei Midrashot* 2:302); *Minḥat Shai*, ad loc.

On the esoteric nature of the ם (final *mem*), see BT *Shabbat* 104a: "Children have now come to the house of study and said things unparalleled even in the days of Joshua son of Nun:… open מ (*mem*) and closed ם (*mem*)—open utterance and sealed utterance."

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *For the abundance of dominion, and of peace there will be no end, upon David's throne and kingdom, that it may be established and upheld*.

84. **upper *he* and lower *he*…** The two *he*s of the tetragrammaton, signifying *Binah* and *Shekhinah*, further demonstrate how the realm below is fashioned after, and integrated with, the realm above. Similarly, final *mem* is manifested below as above.

On the upper and lower *he*s, see above, note 21.

85. **at first, Upper World is open…** Like the lower *he*—which is initially open and then transformed into final *mem*—so too with the upper *he*, signifying *Binah*. She is filled by the "thirty-two wondrous paths of Wisdom" mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1.

86. **Image of the letter ו (*vav*)…** The letter *vav* conveys divine light from the upper realm to the lower realm of *Shekhinah*, signified by the tetragrammaton's final letter *he*. Its shape—a straight line—represents orthographically its function of extension. Its numerical value is six, corresponding to the six *sefirot* whose light is contained within it—*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*—and to the host of chariots that support them.

87. **six sides integrated as one…** The six dimensions within the letter *vav* are configured within *Shekhinah*, symbolized as Moon. The simple shape of the letter *vav* represents the complete union of its six dimensions, despite their plurality. The reference to Adam may signify the masculine aspect of Divinity as represented by *vav*, which symbolizes *Tif'eret*. Alternatively, *Sullam* explains that the value in *gimatriyyah* of the name *Adam* (forty-five) corresponds to the tetragrammaton, signifying *Tif'eret*, when its letters are spelled out with the letter *alef*.

88. **Mystery of mysteries for those who contemplate…** Those who understand this mystical lore properly can perceive how the unity of the central six *sefirot* leads to the erotic union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, unencumbered by other appellations of Divinity. The cryptic last line, "mystery of the image of the body is the image of Adam," reveals the esoteric secret that the Divine anthropos appears as a male androgyne, with the male *vav* having integrated the feminine potency within Himself.

On *vav* as symbolizing *Adam* or the torso, see *Zohar* 2:42a (*RM*), 180b–181a; 3:66b; *ZḤ* 60d (*MhN, ShS*). On the shedding of garments before sexual union, see above, pages

398–99. On the male androgyne, see Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 142–89.

89. **When can they be seen?...** When can the right and left sides, representing *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, be perceived in relation to *Tif'eret*? The *Zohar* thinks of the letter א (*alef*) as being written with two *yod*s that mirror each other astride the letter ו (*vav*): one י (*yod*) forms the upper right of the א; the ו forms the diagonal line in the middle; and the second י is situated on the bottom left of the א. The letter א is the first letter of the alphabet and has the numerical value in *gimatriyyah* of one; thus it serves as a fitting symbol for the entirety of Divinity.

90. ***alef* is the head of all the letters...** Since *alef* symbolizes divine unity, it is the most fitting letter to begin the alphabet, which emerges from "World that is Coming," an epithet for *Binah*. From *Binah* the three *sefirot* of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* issue forth, comprising the letter *alef*. The other letters and the other *sefirot* all emerge after *alef* and its three aspects. This triad also symbolizes the totality of divine influence since it contains the attributes of loving-kindness, might, and their harmonization.

The *Zohar*'s Book of Adam is not to be confused with the ancient *Book of Adam* in the Apocrypha. More likely it alludes to one of several medieval traditions in which the angel Raziel transmitted a magical book to Adam. One such purported text—comprising ancient magical, mystical, and cosmological teachings—was compiled later (probably in the seventeenth century) under the title *Sefer Razi'el* (the Book of Raziel). See above, p. 320, n. 5. On the symbolism of *alef*, see *Zohar* 1:120b, 205b; 2:54a, 123a; 3:53b, 183b, 285a, 294a (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 65b–c, 66a, 74c (last three *ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 88–89 (112); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 5a, 103a.

91. ***vav* and *alef*...** These two letters are different manifestations of the same unity: *vav* in its recondite aspect, and *alef* parsed for apprehension by the mystical adept. *Alef*

has only three components, suggesting the apparent absence of *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod* in the ostensibly complete manifestation of Divinity within the *alef*. Rabbi Shim'on resolves the problem by explaining first that the latter three are latent within the primary three lines of emanation. Second, the upper three, symbolized by the patriarchs, are alluded to by the Torah; and the latter three, by the other two sections of the Hebrew Bible—which are part of Written Torah but are not used for the authoritative derivation of ritual law, and are thus subordinate to Torah. In the *Zohar*, prophets are generally associated with the *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, and here, apparently, the section of Writings alludes to *Yesod*. Again the latter three are presumed to be encompassed within *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who are represented by the three components of א (*alef*). Further, since *alef* signifies the number one, which contains all numbers within it, so too does *alef* contain all successive letters (and all the *sefirot*) within it.

On *alef* as the number one, containing all numbers within it, see Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 3:15; 33:21; idem, *Yesod Mora* 11:6; *Ketem Paz*, 1:272b–c.

92. **why is its secret six?...** The tension between unity and plurality within Divinity is exacerbated by the numerical value of ו (*vav*)—six—written as a single stroke, while the orthographically composite א (*alef*) has the numerical value of one. The problem is resolved through the pedagogically dialectical process of recognizing the unity that contains plurality. First it is imperative that despite appearances to the contrary, all distinct names, letters, and symbols signify a simple unity as constituted in the tetragrammaton. Once the mystical adept understands this fundamental theological principle of divine unity, one can proceed to understand how diversity branches out from that unity. Each of the letters can be viewed as oscillating between the two poles of unity and plurality.

The reference to *kelal*, "general rule" (or "principle, class"), and *perat*, "specification" (or "particular"), derives from rabbinic hermeneutical rules concerning "a generalization" and "a specification." For these hermeneutical rules, see *Sifra*, Introduction, 1, 7–8; 1a, 2a–b. Cf. *Zohar* 1:16b, 47b, 246b; 2:3a, 25a–b (*Piq*), 161b, 176a–b, 178a (*SdTs*); 3:143a (*IR*), 179b, 264a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 335–36; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 107–8.

93. ***perat, kelal*, and *perat*...** In this dialectical process, *alef* is initially perceived as composite on account of the three strokes required to write it. This apparent multiplicity is then bound together into a single unity, equivalent to the number one. But the letters אלף (*alef, lamed*, final *pe*) that form the word *alef* can also be read as אלף (*elef*), one thousand—illustrating the dialectic.

The traditional commentaries explain that the arms and body signify the ten *sefirot*, each of which contains ten *sefirot*, yielding one hundred; ten within each of those hundred leads to the total of one thousand. See *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

94. ***Vav*...** The letter appears as a single stroke, manifesting unity and representing the *sefirah Tif'eret*. But *Tif'eret* stands metonymically for the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, further confirmed by *vav*'s numerical value of six. Those six, however, comprise the anthropomorphic form of Divinity, called *Adam*. Thus, the general rule manifested specification, which in turn become manifest in unified mystery as Primordial Adam.

95. ***vav*... in a single totality...** Genesis 1:4 esoterically demonstrates how *vav* and *alef* are different manifestations of the same attribute of Divinity. The creation of *light* on the first day of creation, symbolizing *Ḥesed*, exhibits the initial unity of the letter ו (*vav*). With the creation of *darkness*, however, *vav* becomes *alef* as it takes on two arms to display *Ḥesed* on one side of its diagonal line and *Gevurah* on the other.

Thus the conclusion of this verse means that *God separated* —and mediated between—*the light* (*Ḥesed*) and *the darkness* (*Gevurah*), reconciling them and thus effecting unity.

By turning to verses from Genesis 1, *Sitrei Otiyyot* construes the unification of Divinity through the recital of the *Shema* as a kabbalistic practice and interpretation of the esoteric doctrine of *ma'aseh bereshit*, "account of creation."

On *Tif'eret* as mediating the conflict between light and darkness, alluding to *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* respectively, see *Zohar* 1:16b–17b, 19b; 2:24a, 167a. On this explanation of *separated*, see *Ketem Paz* 1:273a; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

96. **integrated in the letter *vav*...** The conclusion of the verse from Genesis (*one day*) illustrates the completion of the dialectic, as mediation between the two disputants gives way to integration and unification. Divine light that had started the emanative process in the form of *vav*, then transforming into *alef*, prominently displays *vav* again in the repetition of the word ויהי (*va-yhi*), *and there was evening*, ויהי (*va-yhi*), *and there was morning*.

97. **ויהי (*va-yhi*), *and there was*...** In the rabbinic and medieval understanding of biblical Hebrew, the so-called *vav*-consecutive form is construed as changing a verb's tense from the past to the future, and the future to the past. Thus, the word יהי (*yehi*) would normally be construed as "there will be," but when prefixed by the conjunction *vav* it becomes ויהי (*va-yhi*), *and there was*. Similarly, the word היה (*hayah*) normally means "there was," but with the addition of the *vav* as והיה (*ve-hayah*), *and there will be*. Here the text draws attention to this distinctive feature of biblical Hebrew and suggests that the prominent role of the *vav* emphasizes the separate identity of *evening* and *morning*, signifying *Gevurah* and *Ḥesed* respectively, now that their actions have been completed. Once their struggle is resolved by *vav*—which is positioned on a diagonal between the two equipoised arms—they are marvelously united as *one day*.

98. ***waters under the heavens…*** This is the divine overflow that gushes from *Tif'eret*, signified by the middle line of א (*alef*) and called *heavens*. The place *under the heavens* represents *Gevurah*, which is symbolized by *alef*'s lower branch. The *waters*' ultimate source is in *Ḥesed*, which is alluded to by *alef*'s upper branch.

Genesis 1:9 reads in full: *God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered into one place so that the dry land will appear,' and it was so*.

99. **Light that has been hidden away…** This passage continues with the oscillation between *alef* and *vav*, the paradoxical poles of diversity and unity within Divinity. According to rabbinic legend, when God created light on the first day of creation, He treasured it away for the righteous in the world to come, lest it be misused by the wicked. Here, the core metaphysical aspect of the rabbinic teaching is preserved to explain that when Divinity is manifest in the aspect of *alef*, *alef*'s two branches are represented by the primordial light and the "other side," signifying *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. When this light is "hidden away" and the "other side," here representing *Gevurah*, is also absorbed—the waters *gathered into one place*—the two arms of *alef* converge within *vav*. When the waters are divided on the second day of creation, *Shekhinah* derives from *Gevurah* and appears as "Dry Land." In the verse from Psalms, *Shekhinah* is represented by *city*; She derives sustenance after *Yesod* (figured as *Mount Zion*) receives divine overflow from *Binah* (figured as *the great King*), who is the source of Judgment that is manifest in *Gevurah*.

On the hiding away of the first light, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:6; 41:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 9; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:1; *Bahir* 97–98 (147); *Zohar* 1:7a, 31b–32a, 45b–46a, 47a, 59a, 121b (*MhN*), 131a, 203b; 2:35a, 78b, 127a, 147b, 148b–149a, 220a–b; 3:88a; *ZḤ* 66a (*ShS*), 85a (*MhN, Rut*), 122a (*Mat*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 183; idem, *Sefer*

Mishkan ha-Edut, 140. On the relations between *alef* and *vav*, cf. *Zohar* 2:227b.

On the trope of a lack of a companion, see (in the name of Rabbi Shimon son of Yoḥai) *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23, 117b.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *Beautiful in loftiness, joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, summit of the north, city of the great King*.

100. ***Firmament of heaven…*** The unity of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, represented as *firmament* and "Dry Land," is attained by the emanation of a liquid ray of light, signifying *Yesod*, which is typically construed as the phallus of Divinity.

101. **That ray… ג (*gimmel*)…** Expanding on the previous explanation, the ray of light that emanates from *Tif'eret* is associated with the small extrusion at the bottom of the letter *gimmel*. *Gimmel* is numerically equivalent to three, apparently symbolizing *Netsaḥ*, *Hod*, and *Yesod*.

On the letter *gimmel* and its successor *dalet*, see BT *Shabbat* 104a (ascribed to the children in the study hall): "*Gimmel dalet*, show kindness to the poor [*gemol dallim*]. Why is the foot of the *gimmel* stretched toward the *dalet*? Because it is the habit of the benevolent to run after the poor. And why is the foot of the *dalet* stretched out toward the *gimmel*? To make himself available to him [the benefactor]. And why does *dalet* turn its face away from the *gimmel*? So that he will give to him secretly, lest he be ashamed of him." See also JT *Megillah* 1:8, 71d. In Zoharic Kabbalah, this relationship is usually construed as the erotic relationship between masculine and feminine aspects of Divinity. Thus, the letter *gimmel* signifies גומל (*gomel*), "bestowing," as in the prominent liturgical phrase *gomel ḥasadim*, "bestowing kindnesses." See *ZḤ* 67a–b, 72c, 74c (all *ShS*). Cf. Jacob ha-Kohen, "Peirush ha-Otiyyot," 207. On *gimmel* as *Yesod*, see *Zohar* 1:3b, 234b, 244b; 2:181a; *ZḤ* 67a–b, 74c (both *ShS*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 340; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 229; Vol. 11, p. 428, n. 198.

102. **this form, divested of all…** When the Divine Male and Female are prepared for erotic union, the Male appears as *vav*—all divine energies concentrated in the simple stroke, divested of orthographic appendages. And this is how the tetragrammaton is written, with a *vav* preceding the final *he*, representing *Shekhinah*.

103. **this is a secret of secrets…** Drawing to a conclusion, the speaker explains that *alef* displays the diverse complexity of *sefirot* within the unity of the very letter that represents unity. "To teach" renders לאלפא (*le-allafa*), and "to learn" renders למילף (*le-meilaf*), both playing on the similarity to the name of the letter *alef*. Why is *alef* the first letter of the alphabet? To indicate that an individual's primary responsibility is to understand the mystery dwelling within the letter *alef*—learning about the paradoxical nature of divine unity.

The verse in Deuteronomy reads in full: *For ask now of primal days that were before you—from the day God created a human on the earth—and from the end of the heavens to the end of the heavens: has anything as great as this ever happened or has its like been heard?* In BT *Ḥagigah* 11b, the verse is interpreted as imposing a limit on cosmological speculation: "You may inquire concerning *from one end of heaven to the other*, but you may not inquire concerning what is above, what is below, what was before, what is after." Here the restrictions are recast, limiting only the knowledge of the variations between Divinity within the *alef* and within the *vav*; however, the text hints about a time—probably that of the author himself—when even knowledge of the *alef* should be known by all.

The restrictions on cosmological speculation recall the Gnostic striving after "the knowledge of who we were, what we have become, where we were, where we have been thrown, where we hasten, from what we are redeemed, what birth is and what rebirth" (Clement of Alexandria, *Excerpts from Theodotus* 78). See M *Ḥagigah* 2:1; *Midrash*

Tanna'im, Deuteronomy 18:13; JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21, 108b; *Zohar* 1:1b, 30a; 2:22a, 93a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 31 (36–37); idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 20, 375; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 371.

104. **before the human…** The verse in Deuteronomy is read hyperliterally to indicate that the great revelation that occurred—namely the manifestation of *alef*—took place even before the human being was created. Consequently, the *alef* determines humanity's true purpose on earth.

For a different interpretation, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

105. **He stands divested of all…** The written form of the holy name appears with a *vav*, rather than an *alef*, before the final *he* to indicate the unmediated intimacy of the Male and Female within Divinity, even as the arms, representing *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, play a role in the erotic embrace (as per Song of Songs 2:6).

106. **enters and exits…** Understanding the esoteric meaning of the tetragrammaton procures eternal bliss for the mystical adept.

On entering and exiting, see above, note 31.

107. **Image of the letter י (*yod*)…** Now the text begins to recapitulate the essential themes of *Sitrei Otiyyot*. The letter *yod* is characterized as a point that occupies no space and thus yields no purchase for apprehension. *Yod* represents *Ḥokhmah*, which not only derives from the yet-more-unknowable *sefirah* of *Keter*, called Thought, but also is the mystery from which the rest of Divinity emerges, in the form of *sefirot* and of the other letters of the tetragrammaton.

108. **פליאות (*peli'ot*), marvels…** Being manifested as the lower notch in the letter *he*, signifying *Binah*, the point presides over six *sefirot*—*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. The letter *he* has the numerical value of five, but through symbolizing *Binah*—who is associated with fifty gates of understanding (see the

notariqon explained above in note 11)—it also becomes associated with the word נפלאות (*nifla'ot*), "marvels" (or "wonders"). Here a different *notariqon* is performed upon the related word פליאות (*peli'ot*), "marvels," dividing it into components of פלא (*pele*), "wonder" (or "arcanum"), and אות (*ot*), "letter," with the letter *alef* participating in both components. Consequently, the profundity of the letter *yod* is astounding—smallest of all letters, yet embracing all.

On *yod* rising within Thought, see above, note 3.

109. ***vav*'s chariots spread over the Female...** Final *he*, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, exists in relationship with either the divine Male, represented by *vav*, or with a "harsh shell," perhaps referring to the demonic Other Side. Each of these encompasses Her. The former does so with the upper "chariots," representing *sefirot*, and lower "chariots," signifying their cognomens (or alternatively, with the "chariots" who prevail beneath *Shekhinah*).

On the semi-circular shape, see above, note 79. Cf. the other interpretations offered by *Ketem Paz, Sullam*, and *Matoq mi-Devash*, who produce a full circle shape. On upper and lower chariots, see below, p. 459, n. 40.

110. **figure is formed with Her chariots...** Yet a different way to conceptualize the final *he* is with angelic beings, called here "chariots": they surround *Shekhinah*, and She appears as the consummating point in the middle. Her appearance there is an enactment of the letter's name: הא (*He*), *Here*... (Genesis 47:23). The letter *he* also signifies *Binah*, who adopts the lower *sefirot* contained in *vav* as Her body, while She is completed by the appearance of the transcendent mystery within—namely *he*'s central point, which is contributed by *Ḥokhmah*, represented as *yod*. Both *he*s appear as figures who become manifest below while informed by the influence of Wisdom (Higher and Lower). The point within the upper *he* is ever-present since *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* are never divided.

111. **supernal Point presiding over nine…** The enigmatic language regarding the two sets of nine pillars refers to the esoteric teaching of the *sefirot* that are above the *sefirot*. Emerging from *Keter*, which is represented by the "Lamp," nine upper, recondite pillars serve as the roots for nine others—the *sefirot* of *Keter* through *Yesod*. Although the highest *sefirot* cannot be named, they can be recognized in their manifestations in the letters *he* and *vav* of the tetragrammaton, which comprise the lower set of *sefirot*. See *Ketem Paz*; above, note 7; next note.

Cf. *Matoq mi-Devash*, who interprets the nine transcendent pillars that emanate from the supernal Lamp as nine vowel points. Emphasizing the primacy of the letter *yod*, this interpretation construes the text as explaining that all letters emerge from *yod* and all vowels emerge from the primal nine columns that are inscribed beneath it. Whether chariots are actually vowels or not, they are akin to vowels insofar as they carry or transport the letters.

On the letters emerging from "paths" of Wisdom (*Ḥokhmah*), see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1.

112. **upon *yod*…** Though pillars generally stand below the object they support, in Kabbalah the supports can also stand above—insofar as they are the beginning of emanation. The upper *sefirot* are so elevated that they are called *Ein Sof*, and they are the source from which the lower *sefirot* emerge. The fragmentary conclusion indicates that all points and all *sefirot* in the eschatological end-time will be reabsorbed in their point of origin above.

This translation follows V21, O2, Venice, and the printed editions, whereas the Cremona text ends with the words "will return to that point."

In the printed editions, the material that follows through 9c is labeled *Sitrei Otiyyot*, but it is not included in this translation, for two reasons. First, most of the material in 7c–8c has been identified as that of the early fourteenth-century kabbalist Joseph Angelet. (See Meroz, "R. Yosef

Angelet u-Khtevav ha-Ivriyyim," 305.) As for the subsequent material, it is actually from *Sitrei Torah* and has been published in *Zohar* 1:253b–254a. (See Vol. 11, pp. 623–30.)

1. קו המדה **(*Qav ha-Middah*), Line of Measure…** Literally, *measuring line*, as found in Jeremiah 31:39 in a description of the future rebuilding of Jerusalem. Cf. Zechariah 2:5: *I lifted my eyes and I saw, behold, a man; and in his hand was a* חבל מדה (*ḥevel middah*), *measuring rope. 'Where are you going?' I asked. 'To measure Jerusalem,' he replied, 'to see how long and wide it is to be.'* The *Qav ha-Middah* in the *Zohar*, in contrast to the biblical measure, is the luminous, invisible, divine instrument emerging from *Ein Sof* that "measures"—and in so doing, it gives scale, shape, light, color, and (eventually) permanence to the *sefirot* below. It is often identified with the *Botsina de-Qardinuta*, the Lamp (or "Spark") of Adamantine Darkness, which is involved with the same processes. Much of this chapter, *Qav ha-Middah*, treats the paradox of the unity of Divinity in relation to the delineation of the dimensions of the upper reaches of the divine being.

The mythic depiction of God as divine surveyor originates in Isaiah 40:12: *Who measured the waters with the hollow of His hand, and gauged the skies with a span, and meted earth's dust with a measure, and weighed the mountains with a scale, and the hills with a balance*? On the primordial line of emanation, see Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 113: "The first emanant that emanated from the Hidden Cause carried the potential for all other things, and it is a very subtle existent. The straight line begins to extend and to spread out from it.… Beyond this it is forbidden to contemplate.… This is similar to that existent that exists in potential in the mind; that is, the suckling of the soul and its sustenance."

The *Zohar* refers to two measuring tools: קו המדה (*qav ha-middah*), *the measuring line*, from Jeremiah 31:39; and המדה קנה (*qaneh ha-middah*), *the measuring reed*, from Ezekiel 40:3, where it was to be used to measure the future Temple. In the present work, they apparently both refer to the same instrument, but the former term is used when operating in

the sefirotic realm, and the latter term regarding the angelic realm.

A different conception of a primordial line is offered by Azriel of Gerona, who interprets this line as an organizing instrument for the world's composition from primary elements. In BT *Ḥagigah* 12a, another primordial line is attested as an organizing instrument: "תהו (*Tohu*), *Chaos* (Genesis 1:2), is a green line that encompasses the entire world; and darkness emerges from it, as is written: *He set darkness His hiding-place round Him* (Psalms 18:12)." Cf. Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 89–90.

In their role of measuring and assigning limitations, the *Qav ha-Middah* and *Botsina de-Qardinuta* (also known as *Botsitsa de-Qardinuta*) express the power of Judgment and feminine traits; as expressions of expansiveness they are more masculine. See below, notes 17, 20.

On the identification of the *Qav ha-Middah* and the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness, see *Zohar* 1:18b; 2:233a–b, 258a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 57a, 58b (both *QhM*); *TZ* 18, 37b. On the enigmatic quality of the teaching of the *Qav ha-Middah*, see Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim*, 4:7: "… even basic understanding is elusive."

On the *Qav ha-Middah* in general, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 11; Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 24c–40b; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 146. On the Line of Measure and the Reed of Measure, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:8; *Zohar* 2:233a–234a, 258a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 31c, 33a–d, 86a (*MhN, Rut*); *TZ* 18, 37b; Vol. 6, p. 341, n. 235.

The larger messianic context for the term *measuring line* reads (Jeremiah 31:31, 38–40): *Behold, the days will come when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah…. Behold, the days will come —says YHVH—when the city shall be rebuilt for YHVH from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. And the measuring line shall go straight out to the Gareb Hill, and then turn toward Goah. And the entire Valley of the Corpses and*

Ashes, and all the fields as far as the Wadi Kidron, and the corner of the Horse Gate on the east, shall be holy to YHVH. They shall never again be uprooted, or overthrown.

2. **mystery of unification** That is, the esoteric meaning of Deuteronomy 6:4: *Hear, O Israel, YHVH, our God, YHVH is one*.

3. **hard-hearted…** This expression renders טרישין דלבא (*terishin de-libba*), whose key term derives from the root טרש (*trsh*), "rock, stopped-up, deaf." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 23:6; 24:6; BT *Bava Batra* 103a, *Arakhin* 14b, *Ḥullin* 46b, 47b; *Tanḥuma, Vayishlaḥ* 8; Jastrow; Sokoloff, *Dictionary of Babylonian Aramaic*, s.v. *trsh*. *Arukh* explains that in Arabic the word *terush* means "deaf."

On the significance of the *Shema*, see *Zohar* 1:12a, 18b; 2:43b (*Piq*), 133b–134b, 160b–162a, 202b, 216a–b; 3:162a, 195b, 203b–204a, 236b, 262b, 263a, 264a–b, 268a; *ZḤ* 48a (*MhN, Rut*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:971–74.

4. **hidden letters, rows, and words…** *Matoq mi-Devash* interprets "hidden letters" as a reference to the esoteric sequence of names כוזו במוכסז כוזו (*Kuzu be-mukhsaz kuzu*), which is an encoded version of יהוה אלהינו יהוה (*YHVH Eloheinu YHVH*), formed by replacing each letter of this triple divine name with the following letter in the alphabet. Whereas יהוה אלהינו יהוה (*YHVH Eloheinu YHVH*) usually denotes the triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, כוזו במוכסז כוזו (*Kuzu be-mukhsaz kuzu*) denotes *Malkhut*. He says further that "rows" signifies the two groupings of seven letters each (see below, notes 10–11), and that "names" refers to the three names יהוה אלהינו יהוה (*YHVH Eloheinu YHVH*) themselves. One should *Hear*, that is, attend carefully to the hidden and revealed aspects of the divine mysteries in this verse.

On the formula *Kuzu be-mukhsaz kuzu*, see *Zohar* 1:18b, 23a (*TZ*); 2:261b (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 43 (51–52); Vol. 1, p. 141, n. 261. In the medieval period it became a custom to write this magical fourteen-letter name on the back of mezuzah scrolls, on the other side of the

three divine names. See *Maḥazor Vitri*, 648–49 (and notes there); Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin, Mezuzah, ve-Sefer Torah* 5:4, and *Haggahot Maimoniyyot*, ad loc., n. 4; Asher ben Yeḥiel, *Hilkhot Mezuzah*, 18; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 148–49. Cf. Vol. 11, p. 188, n. 463.

5. **Name suspended from it...** The word שמע (*Shema*), *Hear*, can be divided into שם (*shem*), "Name" (symbolizing *Malkhut*), and ע (the letter *ayin*). *Matoq mi-Devash* explains that as is said below, the *ayin* represents *Tif'eret*. The word *shema* can also mean "understand," so that it is associated with *Binah*. The verse in Samuel describes the ark, recaptured by King David from the Philistines; the ark typically symbolizes *Malkhut*, consummated when She houses the masculine aspect of Divinity above.

On *Malkhut* as *ark*, see *Zohar* 1:2a, 33b, 50b, 59b, 99b (*ST*), 228b, 251a; 2:13a, 214a, 235b, 259a–b (*Heikh*); 3:199a; *ZḤ* 122b (*Mat*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 75 (95). On the association of hearing and *Binah*, see *Zohar* 3:138b (*IR*).

The full verse reads (according to its simple sense): *Then David and all the troops that were with him set out from Baalim of Judah to bring up from there the Ark of God to which the Name was attached, the name YHVH of Hosts Enthroned on the Cherubim*.

6. **ע (*Ayin*), *Eye*...** The name of the letter ע (*ayin*) also means "eye," signifying the blessed Holy One's attentiveness toward *Malkhut*. The phrase "[from the beginning of the year] until the end of the year" is an Aramaic rendering of Deuteronomy 11:12: [*The eyes of YHVH your God are perpetually upon her from the beginning of the year*] *until the end of the year*. While the simple meaning of *her* refers to the land of Israel, the *Zohar* typically construes a feminine pronoun as referring to *Malkhut*. "Beginning of the year" signifies *Binah*, while "end of the year" represents *Malkhut*. Taken together, they indicate

that divine blessing extends all across the sefirotic structure, that is, through the entirety of Divinity. Meanwhile, this image reframes Divinity in terms of time as well as space. “Benevolent eye” is from the side of *Ḥesed* (Loving-kindness), while “malevolent eye” is from the side of *Gevurah* (Judgment).

In midrashic literature the title Israel the Elder refers to Israel the patriarch (Jacob), as opposed to the people Israel. Here, this title alludes to *Tif’eret*, known as *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel). Thus, the call *Hear, O Israel* is a prayer directed toward the central figure among the *sefirot*.

The “benevolent [or: generous] eye” recalls a midrashic interpretation of a verse in Proverbs. See BT *Sotah* 38b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi: “We give the cup of blessing for the recital of Grace after Meals only to one who has a generous eye, as is said: *He that has a generous eye* יְבֹרָךְ (*yevorakh*), *will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor* (Proverbs 22:9). Do not read *yevorakh, will be blessed*, but rather יְבָרֵךְ (*yevarekh*), *will bless*.” See *Zohar* 2:198a, 218a–b; 3:117b, 130a, 136b (last two *IR*), 147b, 187a, 203a.

Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 56a, where Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish teaches that Jacob’s sons declared their true belief to their father with the words: *Hear, O Israel!* [namely Jacob]. *YHVH is our God, YHVH is one*.

On Israel the Elder, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11, 70:2, 73:2, 74:11, 76:5, 77:1, 92:2; *Zohar* 1:233a; 2:4a, 43a (*Piq*), 160b, 216a; 3:119b, 126a, 262b–263a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42–43 (51); cf. idem, *Maskiyyot ha-Kesef*, 27.

On the verse in Deuteronomy, see especially *Zohar* 3:137b (*IR*), 293b–294a (*IZ*), and also 1:107a, 199a, 250b; 2:157b, 226a; *ZḤ* 87c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 105.

7. **Israel the Small…** The *Israel* in the phrase *Hear, O Israel* signifies *Yesod*. Similarly, the upper *vav* and lower *vav*

represent *Tif'eret* and *Yesod*, respectively; the divine phallus *Yesod* serves as a lower extension of the male *Tif'eret* above. "Spring" signifies *Yesod*, who issues forth from *Tif'eret* and saturates the "well that never ceases," representing *Malkhut*.

The *Idra Rabba* explains a discrepancy in biblical verses regarding a single *eye of YHVH* or the plural *eyes of YHVH* by saying that the plural pertains to *Ze'eir Anpin*, whereas the singular pertains to *Arikh Anpin*. Actually, *Arikh Anpin* also has two eyes, but that realm is so unified that the two turn into one. That same teaching is offered here esoterically: the uncited part of the Aramaic version of Deuteronomy 11:12 (from the last paragraph) refers to God's eyes; and the verse in Job cited here (according to the manuscripts and early printing) reads עינו (*eino*), *His eye*, in contrast to the Masoretic text, which reads עיניו (*einav*), *His eyes*.

On *eyes of YHVH* and *His eye*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 71:5 and Theodor, ad loc.; *Minḥat Shai* on Job 36:7; Vol. 8, pp. 338–41, and nn. 50, 56, 60, 62. For other instances of a difference between the Masoretic spelling or wording and the *Zohar*'s reading, see above, pp. 365–66, n. 136.

The phrase ישראל זוטא (*Yisra'el Zuta*), "Israel the Small [or: the Junior; the Youth; the Lesser]," derives from Hosea 11:1: *When Israel was a youth I loved him*. See *Zohar* 1:223b; 2:43a (*Piq*), 216a; *TZ* 14a (intro); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42–43 (51). On the two *vav*s, see *Zohar* 1:18a, 119a; 2:9b, 226b; 3:12b, 53b, 66b, 74b.

The full verse in Job reads: *He does not withdraw His eye from the righteous; with kings upon the throne He seats them forever, and they are exalted*.

8. **measure that has no measure...** The preceding material interpreted the words *Hear, O Israel*. What follows is the paradox of "measure that has no measure"—the limitless light of *Ein Sof* that is circumscribed within *Keter* and is meted out for each of the *sefirot*, which are signified by "sides." The unity of these two aspects of the *Qav ha-Middah*

(boundless light and demarcated light) is the subject of the chapter.

9. יהוה אלהינו יהוה **(*YHVH Eloheinu YHVH*)...** There are several different ways to contemplate the meaning of these three divine names, in the middle of the opening line of the *Shema*. First, as a name of fourteen letters, bearing mystical significance and having magical power (see above, note 4). Second, as alluding to the range of *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* through *Malkhut*. Third, as a trinity, esoterically constituting the divine unity.

The first occurrence of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) represents *Ḥokhmah*, signified as "above" and as "beginning." From *Ḥokhmah* emerge the thirty-two paths of wisdom (see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1). The name אלהינו (*Eloheinu*), *our God*, identified as the "middle" and associated with Moses, symbolizes *Tif'eret* (along with the other five *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). *Tif'eret* mediates between the opposing forces of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, represented by "Abraham and Isaac." The final one of these three names, the second יהוה (*YHVH*), signifies *Malkhut*, called here "below" and identified with King David. Thus the full expanse of Divinity is contained in these names, from *Keter*, and it is called Infinite (or Limitless).

Medieval Christian polemics asserted that these three divine names in the opening line of the *Shema* signify the Trinity. Here, instead, the *Zohar* presents a kabbalistic trinity, "a single mystery."

For other explanations of this triad of divine names, see *Zohar* 1:15b, 18b; 2:43b, 162a; 3:162a, 263a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 75–76; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 14–15, 24–25, 35–36; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 82 (104–5), 103–6 (132–35); idem, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 26; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 972–73. Cf. *Zohar* 2:43b, 160b. On the unusual association of *Eloheinu* with *Tif'eret*, see *Zohar* 2:159b (*RM*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 76. On the kabbalistic response to the Christian Trinity, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:973–74; Katz, *Exclusiveness and*

Tolerance, 18–19; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 140–45. Cf. Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 82 (104–5), 103–6 (131–35); idem, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 27; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 14.

In *Qav ha-Middah*, the term *Ein Sof* functions in multifarious ways. Here, it refers apparently to *Keter*, or it is the upper dimension of Divine existence that, together with *Malkhut* as the bottom rung of the *sefirot*, comprises the entirety of Divinity. However, "infinitely" also renders אין סוף (*ein sof*), literally "limitless" (or "endless"), functioning adverbially, rather than as a proper noun that signifies a particular *sefirah*. On the various meanings of the term *ein sof*, see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 88–96; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 229–55; Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, index, s.v. "*Ein Sof*"; Valabregue-Perry, *Be-Nistar u-ve-Nigleh*.

10. **letters of faith…** Referring to the fourteen letters in the *Shema*. These are divided into two groups of seven letters each and allotted to Upper and Lower Worlds, signifying *Binah* (as culmination of the top three *sefirot*) and *Malkhut* (culmination of the bottom seven *sefirot*). Alternatively, the top nine *sefirot* are represented by Upper World, and *Malkhut* is symbolized by Lower World.

"To the end of all rungs" renders עד סוף כל דרגין (*ad sof kol dargin*), which follows V20 and LB1. MN1, J1, Cin1, V5, and V6 all read: עד אין סוף כל דרגין (*ad ein sof kol dargin*), "to the endlessness [or: limitlessness] of all rungs," which emphasizes the infinitude of the entirety of Divinity, including *Malkhut*.

11. **seven letters—ינו יהוה (*YNV YHVH*)…** The latter seven letters of the triad of divine names in the *Shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4). The divine unity expressed in the *Shema* is thus further demonstrated through the parallelism of Upper and Lower Worlds.

12. **ד (*dalet*) is supreme…** According to the Masoretic tradition, in these instances the letters ד (*dalet*) and ר (*resh*) are written larger than regular letters. Only a small tip on top of the letter *dalet* distinguishes them from each other.

Substituting one for the other in these key words is blasphemous, transforming holiness into depravity.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 19:2: “It is written: *Hear, O Israel, YHVH our God, YHVH is One—eḥad*; if you turn the ד (*dalet*) into ר (*resh*), you destroy the whole universe. It is written, *You shall not bow down to another god*. If you turn the ר (*resh*) into ד (*dalet*), you destroy the world.” See *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 74–75.

13. **large ע ד (*ayin, dalet*)...** ע (*Ayin*) is the last letter of the word שמע (*shema*), *Hear*, and it, too, is written large. Together with the *dalet* at the end of the verse, the two letters form the word עד (*ed*), “witness”—teaching that when one recites the *Shema*, one testifies about the unity of Divinity.

On the large letters *ayin* and *dalet* as signifying testimony, see Jacob ha-Kohen, “Peirush ha-Otiyyot,” 46; *Zohar* 2:160b; 3:236b; *ZḤ* 45a, 76c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 75; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 79 (100–101); idem, *Maskiyyot Kesef*, 26.

14. **Whoever knows this mystery...** In this text, the most esteemed esoteric knowledge is that of the *Qav ha-Middah*. Thus, the *Qav ha-Middah* is both God’s instrument for gauging the dimensions of the *sefirot* and the kabbalist’s instrument for apprehending the measurements of Divinity.

This promise echoes the one found in the *Shi’ur Qomah* literature, in which one is assured that knowledge of the immense mystical measurements of the divine limbs will similarly bring salvation. Offering this promise here apparently identifies the measurements of the *Shi’ur Qomah* with the measuring enacted by the *Qav ha-Middah*. See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §952, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: “Whoever knows this measure of our Creator and this praise of the blessed Holy One, which are concealed from people, is assured of life in the world to come. He will accrue benefit in this world from the world to come; and his days will be lengthened in this world.” See

ibid., §§377, 484; Ibn Ezra on Exodus 33:21 (long); *Zohar* 1:133a, 241b; 2:34a, 71b, 122b, 130b, 134b, 161a, 163a, 213b; 3:130b, 138b (last two *IR*); *ZḤ* 73b, 74b (last two *ShS*), 106b (*Tiq*); *Sefer Razi'el ha-Mal'akh*, 38a.

Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 11b: "Whoever is unconcerned about the honor of his Maker, deserves to have never come to the world.... One might have thought that a person may ask with regard to what is above, what is below, what was before, and what is after. [Therefore,] the verse states: [*For ask now of primal days that were before you, from the day God created a human on the earth and*] *from the end of the heavens to the end of the heavens* (Deuteronomy 4:32)—*from the end of the heavens to the end of the heavens*, you may ask [what is in between]; but you may not ask what is above, what is below, what was before, or what is after." See above, p. 410, n. 103.

On the *botsina de-qardinuta* as a contemplative instrument for the kabbalist to measure the divine form, see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 146–47; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 68–69; Wolfson, *Luminal Darkness*, 117.

15. **Length and Breadth...** The *Qav ha-Middah* calibrates and encompasses the six named dimensions, which are variously called the "mystery," "roots," or "essence" of the *sefirot* below. These scales of measurement allude to aspects of *Keter* and *Ḥokhmah* that become manifest below as *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah, Netsaḥ* and *Hod, Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*, respectively.

On the circle and the square, see Lavi, *Ketem Paz* 1:15b: "The circle instructs about an entity that has no beginning nor end.... This is in contrast to the square, whose form is composed of four lines to four corners. This shape instructs about the limitation of space, since each of its lines begins in one corner and ends in a different corner. This is why they [the kabbalists] associated the square with the Crown [*Malkhut*], since the corners impose limits in scale and measure upon Her [rung] and below. And they associated the circle with the supernal, hidden world...."

For rabbinic discussions of circles and squares, cf. BT *Eruvin* 14a–b, 56b.

On the relationship of these six terms with the *sefirot* *Ḥesed* through *Malkhut* (excluding *Yesod*), see Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 29b–30; *Matoq mi-Devash*. For a different interpretation of these terms throughout *Qav ha-Middah*, see *Sullam*.

16. **thirteen gates…** Signifying six on each of the male and female sides, with *Keter* poised above. The number thirteen may also allude to the thirteen attributes of Compassion, which abide within *Keter*. Lastly, twenty-six is the value in *gimatriyyah* of the tetragrammaton, *YHVH*, indicating that one comprehends the *Qav ha-Middah* through this divine name. Ultimately, *Qav ha-Middah* exerts its influence upon all aspects of Divinity, as it "ascends and descends."

Ascending and descending can be interpreted as an erotic image, leading to the propagation of light below, or as rising to obtain light from the highest reaches in order to bring it down below.

17. **Light Not Existing in Light…** Apparently signifying *Ein Sof*, the source of the light of the *sefirot*, whose radical brilliance renders it invisible—and like utter darkness in conception. *Ein Sof*'s first act is engraving, causing the emergence of the *Botsitsa de-Qardinuta* (Spark of Adamantine Darkness, also known as Line of Measure), called here "spark of all sparks"; and all successive sparks (signifying *sefirot*) will issue from this source of all sparks. Cordovero uses the term "souls" to refer to these incipient *sefirot*, to indicate their relationship to the fully-emanated sefirotic form. The *Qav ha-Middah* appears within the innermost aspect of *Keter*, symbolized by "Will of Wills," and it gauges each of the *sefirot* as they radiate outward. The spark functions as a kind of stylus, engraving Divinity into being—and bearing erotic connotations as well, so that there is an aspect of sexual congress even in this rarefied realm of Divinity.

On the first act of divine creativity as engraving, see *Zohar* 1:15a, 38a; 2:126b; 3:128a (*IR*); *ZḤ* 121d (*Mat*). On the erotic aspects of engraving, see Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 60–69. On the *Qav ha-Middah* from here onward, see Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim* 4:7, 20a–21b.

18. **When this Will desires to ramify…** In the next stage of emanation, *Ḥokhmah*—the spark latent within *Keter*—emerges. *Ḥokhmah* appears colorless (signifying its non-susceptibility to apprehension) when perceived from below, though from above it begins to attain discernible features. The lower *sefirot* can be known through color; and these in turn are anticipated within *Ḥokhmah*. Through a final ascent, its existence is fully realized—both above in its root, *Keter*, and below, as the *sefirah Ḥokhmah*.

19. **gossamer lights…** At this stage, the *Qav ha-Middah* strikes *Ḥokhmah*, causing the emanation of *Binah*, who contains the rest of the *sefirot*, signified by "gossamer lights." Under compression, *Binah* emerges, and the *Qav ha-Middah* imbues *Binah* with the diverse colors of the *sefirot*—white representing *Ḥesed*; red, *Gevurah*; green, *Tif'eret* (encompassing *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*); and black, *Malkhut*. At this point, the lights remain so subtle that they are not yet visible, but they can be heard. Apparently, the full gestation of the *sefirot* lasts twelve months, after which they attain their permanent stations.

Mystical experience can entail synesthesia, the merging of senses, such as lights being heard or as in Exodus 20:15: *All the people were seeing the thunderings* [or: *voices*]. On synesthesia in Jewish mysticism, see Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines*, 160, 287–88.

20. **בוצינא דקרדינותא (*Botsina de-Qardinuta*), Lamp of Adamantine Darkness…** The *Botsina de-Qardinuta* completes its task upon issuing a command to all the *sefirot*, signified by "luminous shoots." Divine light pours forth from *Ḥokhmah* to saturate them and define their scope and color. The Lamp of Adamantine Darkness is apparently another name for the

Qav ha-Middah, gauging the flow of emanation, and giving shape or measure to the *sefirot*.

On the commandment to grow, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:6, in the name of Rabbi Simon: “Each and every blade of grass has a מזל (*mazal*), star, in the firmament that strikes it and decrees, ‘Grow!’”

The term *Botsina de-Qardinuta* has been translated in diverse ways: “spark of impenetrable darkness,” “blinding spark,” “lamp of impenetrability,” “darkened spark,” “hardened spark,” “powerful spark,” “lamp of darkness,” and “a dark flame,” among others. See Vol. 1, p. 107 n. 4. On the variant *botsitsa*, see next note.

In *Zohar* 1:15a, several manuscript witnesses record the variants קדרינותא (*qadrinuta*) or קדרוניתא (*qadrunita*), deriving from the root קדר (*qdr*), “black” (see JT *Niddah* 2:7, 50b), or “penetrate” (BT *Menaḥot* 83a), or “measure [level distances]” (M *Eruvin* 5:4). A short passage in the *Jerusalem Talmud* includes two of these meanings; see JT *Eruvin* 5:3 (23d): “One measures only with a rope of fifty cubits.… Rabbi Me’ir says, ‘מקדרין (*Meqadrin*), They pierce [mountains]’; the sages say, ‘אין מקדרין (*ein meqadrin*), they do not pierce [mountains].’… Rabbi Zeira said in the name of Rav Ḥisdai, ‘מקדרין (*Meqadrin*), One measures [ground distances], including the mountains [that separate].’” The Arabic root *qdr*, “measure,” may also play a role. Rashi interprets חיטי קורדניתא (*ḥittei qurdanaita*), “wheat from Kurdistan” (BT *Pesaḥim* 7a), as wheat that is very hard since it grows in the *Ararat mountains* (Genesis 8:4), translated by Onkelos as טורי קרדו (*turei qardo*). See *ZḤ* 2a (*Mat*), where קרדנותא דסיהרא (*qardenuta de-sihara*) means “darkness [or: eclipse] of the moon,” corresponding to Hebrew קדרות הירח (*qadrut ha-yare’aḥ*), “darkening of the moon.” Alternatively, “plumb-line of the moon,” an instrument measuring the span from *Ḥesed* to *Malkhut*.

The *Botsina* (or *Botsitsa*) *de-Qardinuta*, “Lamp of Adamantine Darkness” (or “Spark of Darkness,” “Dark Light”), is so

potently brilliant that it overwhelms comprehension. Many mystics record similar paradoxical images: “a ray of divine darkness” (Dionysius, *Mystical Theology* 1:1); “the luminous darkness” (Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Moses* 2:163); “the black light” (Iranian Sufism; see Corbin, *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism*, 99–120). Prior to the *Zohar*, Azriel of Gerona and the author of *Ma’yan ha-Ḥokhmah* mention “the light darkened from shining.” See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Tefillah*, 197; *Sefer Ma’yan ha-Ḥokhmah*, 77–80; Scholem, “Te’udah Ḥadashah,” 29–30; idem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 336; Verman, *The Books of Contemplation*, 59–61, 158–59. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:59: “We are dazzled by His beauty, and He is hidden from us because of the intensity with which He becomes manifest, just as the sun is hidden to eyes too weak to apprehend it.”

For other sources on the *Botsina* (or *Botsitsa*) *de-Qardinuta*, see above, p. 343, n. 71. See also Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 31d. The hardness of the *Botsina* may allude to its phallic quality. See Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 60–62, and index, s.v. “hardened spark.”

21. **the One who Shines…** signifying *Ein Sof*, apparently as the transcendent One above the *sefirot*, whose light underlies the entire sequence of events. Earlier, *Ein Sof* was called “Light that Does Not Exist in Light,” but once the *Qav ha-Middah* has completed its calibration of the *sefirot*, it is called the One who Shines. Once all of the *sefirot* are properly arrayed according to their proper scale, size, and color, the Spark of Adamantine Darkness has fulfilled its function and is then properly called *Qav ha-Middah*. Cordovero emphasizes that Spark of Adamantine Darkness and *Qav ha-Middah* are two successive stages of the same entity—one, the essence of the light, and the other its realization through emanation. See *Pardes Rimmonim* 4:7, 21a.

“Spark” renders בוצינא (*botsitsa*), a Zoharic neologism that the *Zohar* uses interchangeably with the term *botsina*. Indeed, *botsitsa* may have been the original term because it

sounds more like the Hebrew word ניצוץ (*nitsots*), "spark." Further, the Arabic word *batsits* means "spark." Rashi (s.v. *botitei*) interprets the phrase בוטיטא נורא (*botita nura*) as found in BT *Bava Metsi'a* 85b as "spark." See Liebes, *Peraqim*, 162.

22. **configuring beauty for all…** Beauty is also a feature that configures the array of *sefirot* as they emerge from *Ḥokhmah*, the "first extension."

23. **One who attains this mystery…** Knowing the mystery of the *Qav ha-Middah* and acquiring mastery over it are the kabbalist's twin goals. The *Qav ha-Middah* is not only God's measuring instrument, but also that of the meritorious kabbalist. See above, note 13.

24. **measurement of the Mystery of Faith…** The *Qav ha-Middah* metes out the dimensions of all aspects of Divinity, comprised as unity and signified by the formula "Mystery of Faith." All aspects of the divine realm operate under the aegis of *Qav ha-Middah*—except for *Ein Sof*, who transcends the *sefirot*, being unnamed and immeasurable, while standing in relation to them insofar as it contains them all.

25. **colors…** Another term for the *sefirot*. When the *Qav ha-Middah* metes out their dimensions, they ascend to receive divine influx and then spread out to their assigned locations. Despite the diversity of recipients, the surveying executed by *Qav ha-Middah* bears a singularity that derives from *Qav ha-Middah*'s immutable nature.

26. **First Gate…** Here begins the detailed process of measuring the different regions of the divine form. Both the sites of the measurements and the measurements themselves are described in abstract, recondite terms. The *Qav ha-Middah* itself is revealed only when it is emanating *sefirot*.

"Clusters clusters" (in which the first word is a present-tense verb and the second is a noun) renders קשיר קשרין (*qasheir qishrin*); alternatively, "joins joints; bonds bonds; links links." The ensuing description refers to seventeen clusters that are grouped into three configurations. While "cluster"

conveys the text's abstractness, the general similarity to the ancient *Shi'ur Qomah* material—which provides mystical measurements for each of the divine limbs—suggests that "joints" is also apt. See *Sullam* and *Matoq mi-Devash* for detailed sefirotic correspondences.

27. **First cluster…** Apparently signifying *Keter*—or the nexus of *Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*—within the *yod* of the tetragrammaton. The two "circles" correspond perhaps to *Tif'eret* and *Yesod*, with the "six thousand worlds" representing the six *sefirot* of *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. Then, the middle six *sefirot* ascend to receive influx from above, conveying it to *Yesod* below.

"Cluster" renders קשרא (*qishra*); alternatively, "nexus, node, knot, bond." Throughout *Qav ha-Middah*, this is how I have rendered *qishra* when the focus is on the union of several units, whereas I use the term "node" when the primary connotation is the juncture itself.

For sefirotic interpretations of the various images and measurements, see Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 30c; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The Talmudic cubit corresponds to the distance from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, or six handbreadths. See BT *Ketubbot* 5b, *Menaḥot* 11a; cf. M *Kelim* 17:10. Modern scholarship has established different scales for Talmudic measures; according to the Na'eh Scale a cubit is 18.9 inches long, and 22.7 inches according to the Ḥazon Ish Scale. "Span" renders זרת (*zeret*), referring to the distance between the thumb and the end of the little finger. This measurement is generally understood to refer to three handbreadths (or half a cubit). The finger (or thumb) breadth is considered to be 0.79 (Na'eh) to 0.94 (Ḥazon Ish) inches in length.

"Cubits" renders אמין (*amin*), following Cin1, O5, O6, LB1, and V20; but Mn1, J1, V and modern printed editions read the nearly homonymous עלמין (*almin*), "worlds." There are

several other instances of this variance in this section of *Qav ha-Middah*, though with fewer witnesses to the variance.

28. **signets…** Apparently corresponding to *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*. Meanwhile, *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by "the blessed Holy One," is longing to ascend and enter their nexus. *Binah* is "greater" than *Ḥokhmah* in that it contains the lower seven *sefirot* at this stage of the divine emanation.

The gates of the "five hundred thousand worlds" probably alludes to the rabbinic teaching regarding the fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), "understanding." See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a. Alternatively, it may allude to the measurement of the Tree of Life, said to stand at a height of five hundred years, or to the measurement of five hundred worlds signifying the extension from *Ḥesed* through *Netsaḥ*. See *Targum Yerushalmi* on Genesis 2:9; *Zohar* 1:18a, 35a, 76b, 78b (last two *ST*); 2:2a; *ZḤ* 122b (*Mat*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 56 (69); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 44.

29. **three spans—smooth…** Apparently signifying *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who do not contain the same complexity as the upper *sefirot*. *Matoq mi-Devash* explains that the *Qav ha-Middah* derives a "span" from *Binah* for each of the six *sefirot* below. The "four thousand other worlds" may signify the manifestation of the four-letter name of God (*YHVH*) within each of the higher worlds or, alternatively, the aspect of *Malkhut*—who is sometimes represented as encompassing four dimensions—within each of them.

"Sixty myriads" derives from the census of battle-ready Israelite males in the desert (see Exodus 12:37) and, as a multiple of six, corresponds to the six *sefirot*—*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*—manifested by *heavens*, symbolizing *Tif'eret*.

For the full verse in Isaiah, see above, note 1.

30. **two-and-a-half spans…** In the continued emanation by *Qav ha-Middah*, "two spans" symbolizes *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*; "half a span" represents *Yesod*, since it is an extension of

Tif'eret; and "half a half-span" signifies *Malkhut* as an extension of *Yesod*.

31. **single measure for the entire Square…** Despite the diversity of *sefirot* that flow into *Malkhut*, they are all ultimately configured by a single calibration. *Tif'eret*, represented as a Circle, also contains complexities within and yet is not reducible to a single measure. This measure is apparently determined by *Binah*, who is associated with the number fifty, and possibly by the five *sefirot*—*Ḥesed* through *Netsaḥ*. Alternatively, *Malkhut*'s dimensions are determined by the numerical value of the letter *he* (namely five), which symbolizes Her. Once She has been established, the "cluster"—the full gamut of *sefirot*—is complete.

32. **first gate is actualized** The actualization of the first gate encompasses the completed gamut of emanation from *Keter* to *Malkhut* (the latter symbolized by Square). Liebes suggests that the first three clusters referred to here signify either the top three *sefirot* or the powers above them. See Liebes, *Peraqim*, 397.

33. **seven thousand worlds…** The total dimensions of this extension from *Qav ha-Middah*.

On the number seven, see above, note 10. On the number five, see above, note 28.

34. **Square is the fulfillment of the mystery of *YHVH*…** This completes the surveying of the first complete cluster, signifying the uppermost potency among the powers above the *sefirot*. The measurement concludes with the consummation of Square, corresponding to the aspect (or "root") of *Malkhut* in that first cluster. Four-sided Square is the site of fulfillment of the tetragrammaton as manifest in that first cluster. Once complete, the measurement of Square ascends to the endlessness alluded to by this cluster.

"Existent" renders קיומא (*qiyyuma*), apparently a translation of the Hebrew medieval philosophical term הויה (*havayah*), and used here to signify the *sefirah* of *Keter*, or to the

first of the powers that exist above the *sefirot*. See Liebes, *Peraqim*, 361–62.

"Endlessly" renders אין סוף (*ein sof*), used in an adverbial rather than nominal sense. Traditional commentaries all treat the usage here as a reference to *Ein Sof*, the utterly transcendent aspect of Divinity that exists beyond the *sefirot*. See Cordovero, *Sullam, Matoq mi-Devash*.

35. **shining Spark…** This next cluster signifies the second potency that abides beyond the *sefirot*, structurally parallel and analogous to *Ḥokhmah* below. The first cluster was utterly recondite, but this one is resplendent with colors, representing the *sefirot* below.

36. **Second Gate…** Apparently corresponding to the "second cluster" (as designated in the printed editions), which is the supreme root or antecedent of *Ḥokhmah*; however, multiple witnesses (V5, V6, Cin1, V20) read "Second Gate." *Qav ha-Middah*'s first emanation in this cluster is of twelve gates, likely referring to twelve limbs of a supernal anthropos. These twelve exist within the Square of the first cluster and are linked to 236 smaller gates in the second cluster, establishing an intricate intertwining of the different stages of emanation. The total number of nodes—248—corresponds to the rabbinic assessments of the number of limbs in the human body, the number of positive commandments, and the number of words in the entire *Shema*. Through contemplation of this second cluster, possibly through the liturgical proclamation of divine unity in the *Shema*, the mystic envisions the body of the divine anthropos.

37. **consists of these twelve…** The twelve major clusters abide in the first cluster but are connected to the 236 clusters below, who appear in the second cluster. The separation between these groups is only apparent, as they exist in unity within the gauging of *Qav ha-Middah*.

38. **like the paradigm…** Defining further the similarities and differences between the first and second

cluster—roots of *Keter* and *Ḥokhmah*, respectively. Here, visibility is associated with the origins of mutability and diversity.

39. **This cluster is first…** First of the succeeding emanations, probably referring to the supernal root of *Binah*, source of multiple colors, but also attesting to this node's discernibility and its orientation downward in readiness for emanation.

The "twelve clusters" (or "nodes"; see above, note 27) that link the first and second nodes above establish the structure of this third node. They may refer as well to the twelve joints of the four limbs of the divine image of Primordial Adam: shoulder, elbow, wrist of each arm; hip, knee, and ankle of each leg.

"Length of days" may refer to the subsequent roots of the seven lower *sefirot* (often signified by "days"), or to the reward for those who can fathom these mysteries. As for the phoenix, it is said to live for a thousand years; here that number corresponds to the height of the "mystery of Adam." Further, the letters of the word אלף (*elef*), "thousand," can also signify the letter that stands at the head of the Hebrew alphabet, *alef*, which is frequently interpreted as a symbol of the human form.

On חול (*ḥol*), see *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:5: "[Eve] gave the cattle, beasts, and birds to eat of [the fruit]. All obeyed her and ate, except a certain bird named חול (*ḥol*), phoenix, as is written: *And I thought: In my nest I shall die, and I shall multiply my days as the* חול (*ḥol*), *phoenix* [or *sand*] (Job 29:18)…. The School of Rabbi Yannai maintained, 'It lives a thousand years, at the end of which a fire issues from its nest and burns it up, yet an egg's volume remains, and it grows new limbs and lives again.' Rabbi Yudan son of Rabbi Shim'on said, 'It lives a thousand years, at the end of which its body is consumed and its wings drop off, yet an egg's volume remains, and it grows new limbs and lives again.'"

On the three nodes, see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 397. Cf. above, p. 373, nn. 6–7. On the twelve joints, see *Zohar* 1:154a, 241a; 2:224a–b; 3:142a–b (*IR*). On the phoenix, see 3 Baruch 6; BT *Sanhedrin* 108b; and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *urshina*; *Midrash Shemu'el* 12:2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), intro, 78a; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:51, n. 151; 5:182, n. 37; Vol. 7, 540, n. 567. On the verse from Job, see Rashi; Gordis; Alter. On the primal signet (or ring), see *Zohar* 1:15a; 3:132a.

"Image of Adam" is a common Zoharic translation of Ezekiel 1:26: *Upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of* אדם (*adam*), *a human being, upon it above*. The term "image of the mystery of Adam" here may refer to the supernal roots of the lower six or seven *sefirot* or of *Ze'ir Anpin* (which is treated in the *Idra Rabbah*). See Liebes, *Peraqim*, 65–68; Idel, "Image of Adam above the Sefirot." On the symbolism of the letter *alef*, see above, pp. 404–5, nn. 89–91. On *elef* and *alef*, see *ZḤ* 6b (*SO*).

For alternate explanations of this passage, see Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 36c–d; *Sullam*.

40. **two sides...** Prefiguring the *sefirot* of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, and their intimate interlacing. The provided measurements survey the total dimensions of the "head" (the supernal root of *Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*), as well as of the "Circle" and its two "sides" (supernal roots of *Tif'eret, Ḥesed*, and *Gevurah*, respectively).

On "forks," see M *Kelim* 13:2; *Tosefta Shabbat* 17:2; *Kelim, Bava Metsi'a* 3:5; *Kelim, Bava Batra* 3:2; cf. BT *Shabbat* 122b.

41. **cluster below and cluster above...** Symbolizing the dimensions of the supernal *sefirot*, corresponding to *sefirot* below. The "cluster below" represents the triad corresponding to *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, while the "cluster above" (here also called Length) alludes to the triad corresponding to *Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*.

On the significance of the numbers six and sixty, see above, note 29.

42. **Depth of the body…** Apparently signifying the supernal root of *Hod*. “Five hundred thousand worlds” symbolizes the total contained within the five supernal *sefirot* roots that extend from *Ḥesed* to *Hod*. Between each act of extension the Spark stands in a state of enwrapped concealment.

The literal meaning of the verse from Song of Songs reads: מעיו (*mei’av*), *his belly, a polished block of ivory, covered* [or: *studded, adorned*] *with sapphires* [or: *beryl; lapis lazuli*].

Enveloped renders מעלפת (*me’ullefet*), which could also mean *wrapped up* (see Genesis 38:14). The Arabic cognate *glf* means “to cover, wrap.” Here, the term signifies the concealed nature of Spark until it is revealed through emanation. In the *Zohar*, the term *mei’av* can signify “belly, abdomen, womb, innards,” but here it refers to the testicles (*Netsaḥ* and *Hod*) of the divine anthropos.

On concealment as a prelude to emanation, see Kara-Ivanov Kaniel, “Paneiha ha-Bo’arot shel ha-Shekhinah,” 195 and n. 62. On the verse from Song of Songs, see Pope, *Song of Songs*; Bloch and Bloch, *The Song of Songs*. Cf. *Targum*.

43. **Height and Breadth…** The figure “three hundred thousand” denotes the number of worlds between “Height” and “Breadth,” which correlate with the *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Gevurah*, below. As the Spark continues to stretch and extend, each new set of emanations are contained within it. The *Qav ha-Middah* both stands upon and comprises the six dimensions that proceed from it, expressed as measurements above (“six sides”) and *sefirot* below (“six sides of the universe”).

44. **three nodes…** Apparently associated with the three joints of the right arm: shoulder, elbow, and wrist. The three of the “other side” designate the parallel joints on the left arm, which is correlated with *Gevurah* below. Their association with the side of Judgment presumably leads Rabbi Shim’on to avoid naming them explicitly. Nonetheless, they flow directly from the dimension of

Length, which is associated with the right arm and *Ḥesed* below.

For various explanations, see Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 37b–c; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

45. **endlessly…** This word renders עד אין סוף (*ad ein sof*). See above, note 9.

46. **emanation resumes…** The Line of Measure, also known as Spark of Adamantine Darkness, alternates between outward-flowing emanation and a restorative inward return before the next revelation. Here, *Qav ha-Middah* joins Depth both to Circle above and to Square below. For the super-sefirotic correlates of *Netsaḥ* are bonded with *Tif'eret* above and *Malkhut* below. Once these are joined, which presumably implies a parallel binding with *Hod*, then all divine potencies above the *sefirot* are united in a single bond.

47. **When that cluster ascends…** Once all of the links are established, the entirety is considered to be a single cluster. Then the internal movements, upward or downward, intensify the tethering of the whole structure—called here the "fixity of faith," referring to the unity of Divinity.

"Riveting the fixity of faith" renders נעיץ נעיצו דמהימנותא (*na'eits ne'itso de-mehemnuta*), signifying the stabilizing culmination of measurement and of the joining of all supernal dimensions in a single unity.

48. **Square stands upon Circle…** The meaning of these pairings is obscure, but apparently they refer to further lines of connection between the different dimensions. Printed editions include "Height upon Depth." For various interpretations, see Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 37d ; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

49. **When enveloped…** Spark oscillates between its functions of vitalizing and concealment. From concealment, the colors ("white, red, green, and black")—specific divine qualities—are assigned to their proper sites. In the *sefirot* below, these colors are associated with *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*,

and *Malkhut*, respectively. The paradoxical formulation *enveloped* [or: *concealed*] *with sapphires* intensifies the mystery.

The term ספירין (*sappirin*), "sapphires," has the apparent extra connotation of *sefirot*. On the term "enveloped," see above, note 42.

50. **four sides...** The four colors are aligned with the four dimensions and the four letters of the tetragrammaton as follows: White/Length/*yod*; Red/Breadth/*he*; Green/Height/*vav*; Black/Depth/*he*.

According to this scheme, the four letters of the tetragrammaton—*YHVH*—correspond to *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut* respectively (or to their roots), thus retaining consonance with the colors white, red, green, and black that are normally associated with them. Usually in Zoharic Kabbalah the first two letters—*YH*—signify *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*. See *Matoq mi-Devash*; cf. Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 37d–38a; *Sullam*.

51. **Spark of the right...** There are seven hundred thousand worlds and six hundred and thirteen spans in each of the four dimensions—Length, Breadth, Depth, and Height—yielding a parallel size and structure throughout the multifarious emanations produced by *Qav ha-Middah*. The "seven" probably alludes to the paradigmatic number of the lower *sefirot*, while "six hundred and thirteen" equals the total number of commandments in the Torah.

Cf. the different figures and interpretations in Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 38a; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

52. **Within these four...** Namely, the dimensions—which correspond to the four letters of the Divine Name. Once these calibrations have been established, they exist eternally within the extension of *Qav ha-Middah*. The significance of "heart" and "spirit" are obscure. See *Matoq mi-Devash*.

53. **Whoever wishes...** The text takes a startling turn here, indicating that the *Qav ha-Middah* is not only an

instrument wielded by God to survey the divine dimensions, but also a mystical tool that the kabbalist can use to envision Divinity and participate in the divine emanative process. Indeed, to attain this spark and participate in the primal flow of being is the very goal of meditation.

54. **in the mystery of supernal Wisdom** This concludes the description of the actions of the *Qav ha-Middah* within the essence ("mystery") of *Ḥokhmah*.

55. **seventeen...** These seventeen clusters are the template for the rest of the emanation from *Qav ha-Middah*. Consequently, all aspects of measurement, emanation, and movement between nodes are present within those clusters. The number seventeen corresponds to the thirteen attributes of Compassion plus the four letters of the tetragrammaton (correlated with the four dimensions and four colors). See Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 38a–b; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

56. **mystery of three names...** Referring to the three divine names in the first line of the *Shema*. The first iteration of *YHVH* has been interpreted above, leaving the latter two for explanation.

57. **mystery standing in the middle...** Indicating a new phase of measurement and emanation, represented by the name *Eloheinu, our God*. This name corresponds to *Binah* below, who is lacking the mysterious depth of previous, higher levels. After completing the previous series of measurements, *Qav ha-Middah* enters a stage of concealment in preparation for the next outward-directed procedures. The "three dimensions of mystery" probably represent the roots of the three lines of emanation from *Binah*: right, left, and center. The measuring by the Spark of Adamantine Darkness appears differently here—of lesser eminence than those above.

See Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 38b–c; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

58. **enhanced before emanating…** The Spark is properly arrayed before it proceeds with the next stage of emanation. It ascends to the limitless mystery above to obtain the quality of Divinity to be disseminated below in the treasure-house that symbolizes the source of *Binah*. When the *Botsitsa* descends, it infuses three invisible purple hues that will inform the three dimensions of mystery mentioned above.

The printed editions read: “Three purples can be seen in it.”

59. **perfection of *Adam*…** Usually in Zoharic Kabbalah the term *Adam* represents the *sefirah Tif’eret*, but here it probably refers to the anthropomorphic figure that abides within *Keter*, that is, above the rest of the *sefirot*. Thus, here it would refer to the higher source of *Ḥokhmah* as adorned and beautified within the roots of *Binah*.

60. ***Botsitsa* begins to emanate…** In the process of configuring the new emanation, the Spark of Adamantine Darkness first ramifies a cluster within the emanation, while the latter is still in a concealed state. Next it emanates the principal node of “one thousand cubits” that receives further expression in its dimension of Length (corresponding to *Ḥesed* below) of “one thousand six hundred worlds.”

61. **a cluster from here and a cluster from there…** Here begins the interpretation of the name *Eloheinu*, proceeding letter by letter. The orthography of א (*alef*) is construed as a ו (*vav*) as the central shaft in the middle, with a י (*yod*) above and an inverted *yod* below. The two *yod*s are represented here by the two clusters, while the *vav* in the middle reaches up toward infinity and then back down to the letter ל (*lamed*), symbolized as a “tower that flies through the air.” The passage then recaps the previous stages of emanations and pauses (during which the Spark of Adamantine Darkness becomes concealed and imperceptible). The *Botsitsa* then strikes this node, causing its

emergence (represented by “one thousand worlds”) and that of the “four myriad worlds,” symbolizing the four sides of the emanants ensuing below (interpreted by traditional commentaries as an allusion to the hidden sources of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif’eret*, and *Malkhut*).

“Treasure-house” renders גניזו (*genizu*); alternatively, “concealment, hiddenness.” In any case, it alludes to the source of *Binah*.

See *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the “tower that flies through the air,” see BT *Ḥagigah* 15b and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *be-migdal ha-porei’aḥ be-avir*; *Sanhedrin* 106b and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *be-migdal ha-porei’aḥ be-avir*; Jacob ha-Kohen, “Peirush al ha-Otiyyot,” 213; *Zohar* 1:6a, 91a; 3:164b, 209a; *ZḤ* 66b, 70a (last two *ShS*), 122a (*Mat*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 89–90 (113–14); *Arukh*, s.v. *migdal*.

62. **five clusters…** Deriving from the numerical value of the letter *he*, which is the third letter of the name אלהינו (*Eloheinu*). These signify further the essences of the five *sefirot* (*Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif’eret, Netsaḥ*, and *Hod*) who emerge from *Binah*. Once measured out, they endure forever.

63. **within Square…** Each of the clusters serves to delimit Square, the principle that is measured out by *Qav ha-Middah* and that manifests below as *Malkhut*. The significance of the number eight is unclear. Cordovero interprets it as an allusion to the four corners of Square (*Ḥesed, Gevurah, Netsaḥ*, and *Hod*) plus their respective links to the essence of *Tif’eret*, which dwells in the middle of Square. Alternatively, it might represent the roots of the eight *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* to *Yesod*. See Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 39a; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

64. **throne has been constructed…** These various clusters complete the supporting structure for the upper preceding emanations. The reciprocal support of upper and lower nodes is now fully enduring. The “middle measure” appears to signify the divine name *Eloheinu*, which stands in

the middle of the three divine names in the first line of the *Shema*.

For alternative explanations of the "middle measure," see Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 39a; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

65. **measure of a node that endures…** Running through the entire structure is the enduring continuity of the divine anthropos above, represented as *Adam*. Traditional commentaries explain that this new measure extending below symbolizes the root of *Yesod*, and it is signified by the letter *yod* in the name אלהינו (*Eloheinu*). *Yod* represents *Ḥokhmah* above, is manifested in the middle name of the triad, and extends to *Yesod* as well.

On the association of *yod* and *Ḥokhmah*, see Asher ben David, "Peirush Shem ha-Meforash," 112; *Zohar* 1:16b, 30b, 95b, 162a (*Tos*), 229a, 232b, 237b; 2:9b, 123a, 123b, 126b–127a, 133b, 176b, 177a (last two *SdTs*), 179b, 219b; 3:2a (standard editions), 10b, 11a, 65b, 66b, 77b, 78a, 92a, 267b, 289a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 32 (37), 87 (110), 88–89 (112); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 32a, 38a, 44b, 95b. On the extension of *yod* downward to *Yesod*, see next paragraph. On this paragraph, see Cordovero, *Elimah Rabbati*, 39a; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

66. **Moses inherited a legacy…** In Zoharic Kabbalah, Moses is identified with the *sefirah Tif'eret*, which is informed by this middle current of divine emanation and which distributes that divine light below. This measure continues to the source of *Yesod*, represented by "holy covenant"; and it contains the measurements that will be surveyed below. Thus it, too, is represented by the letter *yod*, mirroring the measurements above.

This translation follows the Venice printing, which reads: "This measure abides enduringly until the holy covenant." Many manuscripts (O5, O6, Cin1, V20, MN1, J1) read instead: "This measure is the holy covenant,"

collapsing the distance between emanations from the Spark of Adamantine Darkness and the *sefirot* below.

On the association of *yod* and *Yesod*, see *Bahir* 42 (61); Jacob ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Sefer ha-Orah*, 300; *Zohar* 1:56a, 232b; 2:177a, 178a (last two *SdTs*); 3:57b, 142a (*IR*), 289a (*IZ*); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 24b, 27a; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 131, 140, 167–68; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines*, 336–45, 357–77, 384–92; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 35–48, 145–55.

67. **Mystery of Faith…** Signifying the upper source of *Malkhut*, in which all lower entities reside in latent form.

68. **they are able to cleave** On the bliss that is promised to those who know the secrets of the *Qav ha-Middah*, see above, note 14.

69. **Mystery of Faith…** Signifying *Malkhut*, which is the last of the *sefirot* to be gauged (according to *Matoq mi-Devash*). She is represented by the letter נ (*nun*) within the name אלהינו (*Eloheinu*). After having illuminated the array of *Malkhut*, an unspecified upper luminary—signifying *Ḥesed* or *Yesod*—returns to its source in the *Qav ha-Middah* above. The projection of the "single ether," alluding to the י (*yod*) that is the preceding letter in the divine name, produces a series of emanations to fashion the letter *nun*. On account of its lower and more mutable status, this gradient within Divinity is described as "enduring and not enduring."

"Ether" renders אוירא (*avira*), which is an Aramaization of the Greek name of the primal element *aèr*. On the "pure ether," see *Zohar* 2:50a (*Mat*); 3:135b (*IR*), 292b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 70a, 73b, 74b (all *ShS*); Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 33; idem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 31–47; Verman, *The Circle of Contemplation*, 153–56.

70. **dross of gold…** Reflected in the measurement for *Malkhut*—originating in the "measure of the scepter," signifying *Yesod*—is the framework for 365 colors, corresponding to the classical number of negative commandments. Transgression of those commandments

invokes powers of impurity, which are represented as the dross of four metals. The node joining upper and lower worlds signifies the measurement of *Yesod*, who is the source of the colors that appear in the measurement of *Malkhut*.

"Dross" renders the Zoharic neologism סוספיתא (*suspita*), apparently based on Aramaic כוספא (*kuspa*), "pomace, husk, residue." See *Zohar* 1:48a, 52a, 73a, 118b, 193a, 228a; 2:24b, 203a, 224b, 236a–b; 3:51a, 56a; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 182; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 389, n. 54; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 336–38, 348. Scholem discusses its alchemical associations in *Alchemy and Kabbalah*, 38–40. Cf. *Zohar* 1:30a, 71b, 179b. This is the only passage in the *Zohar* that refers to the "dross" of metals other than gold.

71. **From that cluster...** Symbolizing the root measurement of *Yesod*, which disseminates downward. Everything culminates below in the measure of *Malkhut*, who is alluded to as the "luminary that does not shine."

72. **Seven thousand worlds...** The number seven derives from the seven measures that appear in the upper array of *Malkhut* after having descended from the root of *Binah* above.

73. **meting out emanations...** Here begins a new stage of emanation and surveying by the Spark of Adamantine Darkness. *Matoq mi-Devash* explains that these six measures correspond to the letter ו (*vav*), which is the last letter of the name אלהינו (*Eloheinu*). The correlation between these dimensions and particular *sefirot* appears to vary as *Qav ha-Middah* proceeds. Here, *Matoq mi-Devash* indicates that they refer to *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Netsaḥ, Hod, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*, respectively. Cf. above, notes 15, 44, 50.

74. **Lesser *Botsitsa*...** In this latter stage, calibration is enacted by a Lesser (or Lower) version of the Spark of Adamantine Darkness. Ultimately, even these lower measurements represent an uninterrupted continuity that derives from above.

75. **Emanation ramifying to the right…** This marks the beginning of the measurements of the last stage of emanations—manifestations of the name *Eloheinu* in the *Shema*. Each of the stages of emanations begins with an extension toward the right side, preparing for the pattern of the seven *sefirot* below. Each extension has a length of two thousand cubits. For extensive sefirotic explanations, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

76. **point standing amid…** This point is conceived as the radius of the Circle, which is populated by the other potencies. The Circle signifies the calibration of *Tif'eret* and the *sefirot* that surround it (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*).

The "boundary of two thousand cubits" refers to the traditional limitation on how far one may walk beyond the city limits on the Sabbath. See *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:29; M *Eruvin* 3:4; 4:3; BT *Eruvin* 51a; *Zohar* 1:5b; 2:207a. "Miles" renders *milin* (sing. *mil*). The Talmudic "mile" equals 2000 cubits; it derives its name from the Roman mile, though their lengths are not identical.

77. **that circle…** Apparently referring to a lower dimension within the Circle. This could be the measurement for *Yesod*, which would be shorter than the others because of *Yesod*'s intimate connection to *Malkhut* below. An alternative reading of the figure would be "one thousand nine hundred and fifty."

78. **two nodes…** Probably alluding to the nodes at the top and bottom of the letter ו (*vav*), which is the last letter of the name אלהינו (*Eloheinu*). Here, the gauging of Circle is discrete; it does not include the measure of *Malkhut*, which is signified by Square, below.

79. ***YHVH*…** The description of the second iteration of the tetragrammaton within the *Shema* begins with its origin in the higher reaches of the Spark of Adamantine Darkness. "Depth" signifies the measurement of *Hod*, which is located on the left side and thus a primary progenitor for *Malkhut*,

who is also dominated by the left side. An alternative reading of the calibration may be that two different lengths are being measured, one above of one thousand cubits, and another below of twelve thousand cubits.

The word “spans” is not found in any of the extant manuscripts (O6, O5, Cin1, V20, Mn1, J1), but it is supplied by Venice, perhaps from one of its manuscript witnesses.

80. **sight of Woman…** “Woman” renders נוקבא (*nuqba*), representing the measurement of *Malkhut*. Her calibration derives from the efflux of *Tif’eret*, signified by *Adam*, and of the surrounding *sefirot* of *Netsaḥ, Hod, Ḥesed*, and *Gevurah*, as symbolized by Height, Depth, Length, and Breadth. The calibration of the head of Woman begins on the left side. The lack of partitioning within the feminine potency indicates the consolidation of divine powers within Her.

For another explanation of the lack of separation within Woman, see *Matoq mi-Devash*.

81. **without bonding…** Possibly because “Height” lacks predominance in this lower configuration.

The printed texts read טפחים (*tefaḥim*), “handbreadths,” but O6, O5, Cin1, V20, Mn1, and J1 all attest a reading of ספרים (*sefarim*), “books.”

82. **this one emanated…** Alluding to the measurement of *Malkhut*. All measurements here are initiated in the Spark of Adamantine Darkness and operate through the various channels of the Circle, signifying the measurement of the six middle *sefirot*. The emanations and measurements begin for the right side of Square, with a total of four thousand unspecified units, probably cubits. The same amplitude obtains within each of the other three sides of Square.

83. **east side…** In Zoharic Kabbalah, the east side represents *Tif’eret*; here, the emanation that surveys the dimensions of *Tif’eret* also causes the emanation of the middle aspect of “Woman” or “Square.”

84. **Six Orders of the Mishnah…** *Qav ha-Middah* calibrates the measurements of “Faith,” signifying *Malkhut*.

The six potencies above are configured within Her as Six Orders of the Mishnah, which (via synecdoche) stand for the entire Oral Torah, another symbol for *Malkhut*. She is most strongly rooted in "Depth," which represents the gauging of *Hod*, who stands on the left side. Engaging in wordplay, the text interprets the word משנה (*mishnah*) to mean *mi-shanah*, "from Year," which is a symbol for *Tif'eret* and the six *sefirot* that it represents—and from which *Malkhut* derives.

On the symbolism of the term "year," see above, note 6.

85. **its length calibrates…** This is the concluding statement regarding the emergence of the final measurement, but its referent is obscure. The kabbalists can attain knowledge of "this mystery"—either the final measurements or the entire doctrine of the *Qav ha-Middah*—and use it theurgically for holy purposes.

Instead of "extending to the final spark, which has no light at all," Cin1, Mn1, and J1 all attest: "This concludes [the description of] the final spark, which has no light at all."

The full verse in Daniel reads: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him, a myriad of myriads attending Him. Judgment* [or: *the judicial assembly*] *sat* [or: *was seated*] *and the books were opened*. Cf. *Zohar* 3:129a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 373.

86. **Second emanation…** Referring to the measurement of *Malkhut* that emerges from the gauging of Circle above. The subsequent measurement represents the measure of *Ḥesed*, which is signified by "Length." The verse from Exodus refers to Bezalel's final actions in his construction of the Tabernacle, a symbol for *Malkhut*; referring to it here effectively correlates the building with the contemplative recitation of the *Shema* by the kabbalists. The recital thus becomes a symbolic reenactment of the actions of the *Qav ha-Middah*.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *And from the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the pillars and overlaid their tops and banded them*.

87. **know how to divulge…** Here, it is the kabbalistic prowess to reveal secrets that is esteemed, and these revelations adorn *Malkhut*, symbolized by "Faith."

In the book of Daniel, *the enlightened* apparently designates the community of those who shared the prophet's vision. In medieval literature it can refer to either philosophers or, as here, to kabbalists. In certain sections of the *Zohar*, this verse serves performative and experiential functions, inviting the reader to imagine him or herself as *the enlightened* who *will shine like the radiance of the sky*. On these uses of biblical verses, see Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 229–51.

88. **after measuring…** Upon concluding its measuring of the *sefirot, Qav ha-Middah* retreats to the most recondite reaches of Divinity. As it ascends upward, it entrenches the permanence of all the *sefirot*. Subsequently, divine blessing flows perpetually through the channels that *Qav ha-Middah* has fashioned.

89. **One who knows this secret…** The interpretive focus of *Qav ha-Middah* has been the three divine names—*YHVH Eloheinu YHVH*—that are contained within the *Shema*. Knowledge of the processes of the *Qav ha-Middah* apparently allows the mystical initiate to know, and to attain union with, the divine unity while contemplating the *Shema*.

1. ***God spoke all these words…*** Thus begins the utterance of the Ten Commandments, hence the rationale of the editors of the printed editions to include this section within the *Zohar*'s treatment of the *parashah Yitro*. Rather than the weekly Torah cycle, however, this section of the *Zohar* more properly reflects the annual festival of *Shavu'ot*. For the cited passage from Exodus is featured in that holiday's synagogue lection, which commemorates the giving of the Torah at Sinai. Meanwhile, by the time of the *Zohar*'s composition in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, it had become traditional practice in at least some Spanish communities to read Ezekiel's chariot vision (Ezekiel 1) as the festival's prophetic reading. The two pericopes (Exodus 20 and Ezekiel 1) complement each other by describing the most profound revelations within Scripture.

The Account of the Chariot is one of the central objects of study in the history of Jewish mysticism because of the vivid detail in Ezekiel's vision. The Account of the Chariot serves as a central trope in rabbinic discussions of mystical doctrine experience, in the ancient Heikhalot literature, mystical literature of the Pietists of Germany, and in Spanish theosophical Kabbalah. In Zoharic Kabbalah, the term "chariot" also refers pervasively to any supporting structure, or in association with quaternities.

See, e.g., 3 Enoch; M *Ḥagigah* 2:1; *Re'uyyot Yeḥezqel*; BT *Ḥagigah* 13a–b, 14b; Eleazar of Worms and Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirushei ha-Merkavah le-Rabbi El'azar mi-Verms u-le-Rabbi Ya'aqov ben Ya'aqov ha-Kohen*; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 347–437; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 40–79; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:587–91; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 73–97; Farber, *Tefisat ha-Merkavah*; Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot*. On the public reading of Ezekiel 1, see M *Megillah* 4:10; *Tosefta Megillah* 3:34; BT *Megillah* 31a; *Maḥazor*

Vitri, 1:169–70; Abudarham, *Sefer Abudarham*, 245; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 13:9. Cf. Fishbane, *The JPS Haftarah Commentary*, 438.

2. **expound…** See M *Ḥagigah* 2:1: “One may not expound on forbidden sexual relations before three, nor the Account of Creation before two, nor [the Account of] the Chariot in the presence of one, unless he is a sage who understands on his own accord.”

This framing narrative derives from a famous rabbinic story (BT *Ḥagigah* 14b): “Once Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Zakkai was riding on a donkey, traveling on the road, and Rabbi El’azar son of Arakh was guiding the donkey behind him. He [i.e., Rabbi El’azar] said to him, ‘Master, teach me one chapter of the Account of the Chariot [based on Ezekiel’s vision].’ He [i.e., Rabbi Yoḥanan] replied, ‘Have I not taught you: “Nor [may one expound the Account of] the Chariot in the presence of one, unless he is a sage who understands on his own accord”?’ He replied, ‘Master, permit me to say before you one thing that you have taught me.’ He replied, ‘Speak!’ Immediately, Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Zakkai dismounted from the donkey and enwrapped himself and sat upon a stone beneath an olive tree. He [Rabbi El’azar] said to him, ‘Master, why did you dismount from the donkey?’ He replied, ‘Is it possible that while you are expounding the Account of the Chariot, and *Shekhinah* is with us, and the ministering angels accompany us, that I should ride on the donkey?’ Immediately, Rabbi El’azar son of Arakh began expounding the Account of the Chariot, and fire descended from heaven and encircled [or: intertwined with] all the trees of the field, whereupon they all burst into song….”

See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 57: “It must be known that it is unfitting for anyone to explore the depth of this wisdom even if he is a sage who understands on his own accord…. But having seen many who have had the pretension to produce commentaries, each according to the

prompting of his heart, and not according to the way of truth, I have been impelled to don the cloak of zealousness —since this will sustain the book and those who travel its paths—and to explain matters in keeping with the utterances of the sages, that is, the true meaning."

See *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 21:1; JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77a; BT *Ḥagigah* 11b. Cf. ibid., 13a.

3. **Rabbi Abba departed…** Since the Mishnah prohibits expounding the Account of the Chariot in the presence of more than one person. As Rabbi Abba leaves, Rabbi Shim'on commends him for his propriety and encourages him, metaphorically, to study on his own. The sequencing in the text actually has Rabbi Abba leaving before Rabbi Shim'on speaks to him.

On preparing the table, see *Avot* 6:4. On the culinary metaphor in general, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 4:13; *Zohar* 1:255b (*Hash*); 2:29a, 149a, 176a–b, 217b; Hecker, *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals*.

4. **its speaker is unnamed!…** The sequence of the verses is perplexing: the third verse is in the third person, setting the stage, while the first verse is in the first person, with Ezekiel (yet unnamed) reporting his vision. Prophetic books usually open with details of date and place (see, e.g., Isaiah 1:1; Jeremiah 1:1–3; Hosea 1:1; Amos 1:1), but here these appear in verses 2–3.

What rankles Rabbi El'azar is both Ezekiel's apparent independence in attaining mystical visions of God (verse 1), and the general unsuitability of receiving prophecy outside the land of Israel, but El'azar explains that Ezekiel's graphic description had divine sanction. The presumed impropriety may be based on the belief that the other lands were impure.

On the propriety of Ezekiel's prophecy, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 25a and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *bavel garmah lo*; Rashi on Ezekiel 1:1; *Zohar* 1:85a, 149a–b; 2:2b,

5a (*MhN*), 82a–b; *ZḤ* 38a, 92b (*MhN, Eikhah*); Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 57–59; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 49; Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel," 604; Mopsik, "Introduction" to *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 6–8; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows From Eden*, 332–39. Cf. Halevi, *Kuzari* 2:10. On the impurity of other lands, see Amos 7:17; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 40.

Ezekiel 1:3 reads in full: *It happened that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Kevar, and there the hand of YHVH came upon him*.

5. ***Shekhinah*** **descended with Israel into exile…** See *Mekhilta, Pisḥi* 14, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "Wherever Israel went in exile, *Shekhinah*, as it were, went into exile with them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them…. When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them…. And when in the future they return, *Shekhinah*, as it were, will return with them." Here, in addition to *Shekhinah*'s self-exile, both *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, signified by "the supernal, sparkling glory" and "Radiance of *Shekhinah*" respectively, withheld Their light from the *sefirot* below, symbolized by "Her children." After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, most Israelites were exiled to Babylon. Seventy years later, after the conquering of Babylon by Cyrus of Persia, they were allowed to return. Here, the "seventy other years" symbolize demonic powers that serve Nebuchadnezzar, ruler of Babylon.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Ta'anit* 1:1, 64a; BT *Megillah* 29a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:54; *Zohar* 1:68b–69a, 120b, 134a, 149a, 159b, 182a, 211a; 2:2a–b, 41b (*Piq*), 82a, 189b, 216b; 3:2b, 6a–b, 74a–b, 114b–115a, 297b; *ZḤ* 47d (*MhN, Rut*), 65b (*ShS*), 80d, 84a (last two *MhN, Rut*), 92b (*MhN, Eikhah*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23; idem, *Peirush al Merkevet Yeḥezqel*, 58; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 73–74 (92–93); Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 347–49; Urbach, *The*

Sages, 54–57; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:382–85; Meroz, “Merkevet Yeḥezqel,” 602–3; Asulin, “Dialogim al Galut ha-Shekhinah.”

The convention that the Babylonian exile lasted for seventy years is based on certain prophecies, where it is most likely a schematic number. The actual time elapsed between the destruction in 586 and the date presumed for Cyrus’s relevant edict of restoration (538) is only 48 years. See Jeremiah 25:11–12; 29:10; Zechariah 1:12; 7:5.

The manuscripts (MN1, J1, Cin1, L40, CM1) read “from which the latter is nourished for gleaming,” yielding an unusually complicated sentence. This translation follows Venice here for clarity and for the benefit of the reader.

6. **let your words shine** On this expression, see JT *Berakhot* 3:4, 6c; BT *Berakhot* 22a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:1; *Zohar* 2:4a; 3:79a, 105b; *ZḤ* 67c, 70c, 73c (last three *ShS*).

7. **King David, fourth support…** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6, in the name of Resh Lakish: ‘The patriarchs themselves constitute the [divine] Chariot.” In Kabbalah the three patriarchs (Abraham on the right, Isaac on the left, and Jacob between them) symbolize the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*, which serves as a chariot for the three highest *sefirot*, and King David signifies *Malkhut*, the fourth “leg” or “support” of the heavenly throne. *Thirtieth* is interpreted as code for the number three, signifying the three main figures of the chariot, and *fourth* as symbolic of King David, not separated from the others by the conjunctive *and*. *Fifth* is explained as alluding to the five *sefirot* that surround and perfect *Malkhut—Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif’eret, Netsaḥ*, and *Hod*.

The biblical text does not specify the basis for the starting reference date being used to determine *the thirtieth year*. For various opinions, see *Targum Yonatan*; Rashi; Radak; Greenberg; Halperin, *Seeking Ezekiel*, 187.

On the three patriarchs comprising the chariot, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 82:6; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-*

Aggadot, 57; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 396; *Zohar* 1:60b, 89b (*ST*), 99a, 150a, 154b, 173b, 222b, 223b–224a, 248b; 2:23b, 31b, 144a; 3:17b, 38a, 71b, 87b, 99a, 146a, 182a, 262b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 239–40; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 45 (55); idem, *Shushan Edut*, 334, 342; idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 153; Chaze, "De l'identification des patriarches au char divin." On King David as the fourth leg of the throne, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 57; *Zohar* 1:5b, 20a, 60b, 82a, 89b (*ST*), 99a, 154b, 186a, 197b, 248b; 2:144a; 3:142b, 146a. Cf. *Zohar* 1:156a, 237a.

On the interpretation of *the fourth month*, see Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58.

8. **retreat upward of Upper *Shekhinah*...** When *Binah* withdraws, the *sefirot* below are abandoned and their light extinguished; and *Shekhinah*—represented by אני (*ani*), *I*—goes into exile with the Jewish people. God's Glory, also probably signifying *Shekhinah*, is no longer illuminated by the sun, symbolizing *Tif'eret*.

See BT *Berakhot* 59a, in the name of Rav Ḥisda: "Ever since the day that the Temple was destroyed, the firmament has not appeared in its purity, as is said: *I clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their raiment* (Isaiah 50:3)." See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 57 (who recasts the verse as in the Zoharic text).

On the exposure of Supernal Glory, cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 19:4. On *Shekhinah* as *I*, see *Zohar* 1:6b, 65b, 204b; 2:156a, 236b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 380 (and Wolfson's notes there); idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 7a–b, 10b, 18a, 69a, 102a–103a.

9. **expounded in anguish...** The word ויהי (*va-yhi*), *And it happened*, is read as: וי היה (*vai hayah*), "there was woe," or: וי הי (*vai, hi*), "woe, wailing." See BT *Megillah* 10b: "Rabbi Levi, or some say Rabbi Yonatan, said, 'This matter is a tradition handed down to us from the Men of the Great

Assembly: Wherever it is said ויהי (*va-yhi*), *It came to pass*, this denotes sorrow.’ Rav Ashi said, ‘ויהי (*Va-yhi*), *It came to pass*, sometimes denotes this and sometimes not, while בימי ויהי (*va-yhi bi-ymei*), *It came to pass in the days of*, always denotes sorrow.’”

Here Rabbi El’azar contrasts the exilic and idyllic uses of the term. Reading the verse from Ezekiel—*It happened in the thirtieth year*—out of context, El’azar explains that the number thirty signifies the three biblical patriarchs and the *sefirot* that they symbolize: *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*, each of them containing the full decad of *sefirot*. Prior to the destruction of the Temple, *Binah* (represented as “Upper Throne”) shone Her light upon them. The days that the Temple stood manifested the same divine luminosity as the primordial days when light was first created.

On the word *va-yhi*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 41(42):3 (on Genesis 14:1); *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7; BT *Megillah* 11a; Eleazar of Worms on Ruth 1:1; *Zohar* 1:16b, 119b; 2:140b, 167a; 3:231a; *ZḤ* 77a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 57; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 347. On *thirty* as representing the triad of *sefirot*, see *Zohar* 1:6b; Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 48a; idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 46; Meroz, “Merkevet Yeḥezqel,” 600–601.

10. **already there…** The prophet Ezekiel experienced his vision at the River Kevar, which is actually a canal near the city of Nippur in Babylon. The Hebrew word נהר (*nahar*), literally “river,” resembles the Aramaic נהורא (*nehora*), “light”; and in Hebrew, the word כבר (*kevar*) means “already” (or “long ago”). Since Ezekiel’s prophetic vision was a novel occurrence, happening outside the land of Israel, the rabbis sought explanations for its occurrence. Here, its primordial existence resolves the problem. In Akkadian (the language of Babylon), the name of Ezekiel’s *Kevar River* means “the great river.” See *Bahir* 17 (25), in the name of Rabbi Berekhiah: “Why is it written *God said, ‘Let there be light!’* ויהי אור (*Va-yhi or*), *And there was light*, and not והיה (*ve-*

hayah), *And there will be* (or *And there was*)? This can be compared to a king who had a beautiful object and set it aside until he had prepared a place for it; then he placed it there. This is as is written: *'Let there be light!' And there was light*. For it already was."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:1; See Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 494; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 109; *Zohar* 1:6b, 16b, 45b; 3:245b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 1a; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58; Recanati on Genesis 1:3, 3c–d.

On prophecy outside the land of Israel, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 109; *Zohar* 1:6b, 85a, 120b, 149a–b; 2:82b, 170b. Cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10. On the *Kevar* River, see Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel*, 4.

11. **fourteenth for shining...** In the genealogical line beginning with Abraham, David is fourteenth and Solomon is fifteenth. These numbers are treated as types of multiples of *fourth* and *fifth*. King David establishes Jerusalem as the capital of his kingdom and the site for ritual worship, described here as "shining," while Solomon's consummating the throne signifies the completion of *Shekhinah*.

On the genealogy, see *Zohar* 2:85a. On the numerical approach here, see Ibn Ezra, *Yesod Mora* 11:11.

On Solomon's rectification of *Shekhinah*, see *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 15; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 77a; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:12; *Zohar* 1:73b–74a, 150a, 223a–b, 225b, 238a, 243a, 249b–250a; 2:11a, 28b–29a, 85a, 149a, 242a; 3:40b, 61a, 74b, 181b, 297a; *ZḤ* 51c–d, 83b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 22–23 (26–27); idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 24, 47; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 149; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 93–99.

12. **light began to be veiled...** When Solomon reigned, *Shekhinah*, symbolized by *I*, radiated divine light in

its fullness; but in the succeeding monarchies, Her light gradually diminished. Further, *Shekhinah* is only "approaching exile" because while Ezekiel was in Babylon with the exile of Jehoiachin, the Temple had not yet been destroyed.

Midst renders תוך (*tokh*), "middle, during." Rabbi El'azar apparently interprets the term in its latter sense here, which connotes a position occurring within a sequence or duration.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26: "The blessed Holy One made six heavens and sits in the seventh; and of the throne of Solomon we read *Six steps to the throne* (1 Kings 10:19), while he himself sat on the seventh—thus the disc of the moon was full. Henceforth the kings gradually began to diminish. *And Solomon's son was Rehoboam… and the sons of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son* (1 Chronicles 3:10–16). With Zedekiah, of whom is written *the eyes* of *Zedekiah were put out* (Jeremiah 39:7), the light of the moon was no more."

On the dating of Ezekiel's exile, see Rashi on Ezekiel 1:2, s.v. *hi ha-shanah ha-ḥamishit*; Radak on Ezekiel 1:1, s.v. *be-sheloshim*; Scholem, *ZḤ*; above, note 7.

13. ***the heavens ruptured…*** When the light from the upper *sefirot* separated from *Shekhinah, the heavens*—symbolizing *Tif'eret* or the triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*—*ruptured*. *Ruptured* renders נפתחו (*nifteḥu*); alternatively, *split*. Its simple meaning is *opened*, but here Rabbi El'azar interprets the term to indicate the shattering of divine unity.

See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58. On the unusual expression *the heavens opened* [or: *split, ruptured*], cf. 2 Samuel 22:10; Isaiah 63:19. "Actually" renders ודאי (*vadai*); it is a technical term that signals the transparency of the mundane world to the supernal world and, from a hermeneutical perspective, "an overlapping of exoteric and esoteric signification." See Wolfson, "Beautiful Maiden," 80–88.

14. **fashioning the heavens…** The word שמים (*shamayim*), “heavens,” is derived homiletically (based on wordplay) as referring to a unification of opposites. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 4:7, in the name of Rav: “The blessed Holy One took אש (*esh*), fire, and מים (*mayim*), water, mixed them with one another, and from them שמים (*shamayim*), heavens, were made.” In Zoharic Kabbalah, water signifies *Ḥesed* and fire signifies *Gevurah*; together they produce a harmonious blend of Love and Judgment, each incorporating the other. When *Ḥesed*, represented by Abraham, alighted, the primordial light vanished, leaving behind Judgment alone—which then caused the rent in *Tif’eret*, symbolized by “heavens.” The result was the separation of *Tif’eret* above from *Shekhinah*, which manifested in this world as the destruction of the Temple.

On Abraham’s and Jacob’s abandonment of the Jewish people, see BT *Shabbat* 89b, in the name of Rabbi Yonatan: “What is the meaning of that which is written “For *You are our Father: though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not recognize us, You, YHVH, are our Father; our Redeemer from of old is Your name* (Isaiah 63:16)? In the time to come, the blessed Holy One will say to Abraham, ‘Your children have sinned against Me.’ Abraham will reply, ‘Master of the Universe, if so, let them be eradicated to sanctify Your name.’ God said, ‘I will tell this to Jacob. Since he experienced the travails of raising children, perhaps he will ask for mercy on their behalf.’ He said to Jacob, ‘Your children have sinned.’ Jacob replied, ‘Master of the Universe, if so, let them be eradicated to sanctify Your name.’ The blessed Holy One said, ‘There is no reason in elders and no wisdom in youth.’”

Isaiah 50:3 actually reads: *I clothe the heavens in blackness, and make sackcloth their covering*, but the subject “God” is removed here, and the verse is rendered in the passive to indicate that the darkening of the heavens occurred as the result of a process, rather than divine fiat.

See the identical discrepancy in Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 57.

For other instances of a difference between the Masoretic spelling or wording and the *Zohar*'s reading, see above, pp. 365–66, n. 136.

15. ***visions of God…*** Interpreted as an inferior form of mystical prophecy—seeing mere angels rather than Divinity. מראות (*Mar'ot*), *Visions*, alludes to a particular group of angels who were thrust outside their heavenly domain when the heavens were split apart. Like the people of Israel and the *Shekhinah*, the angels are also exiled. Rabbi El'azar may have thought of the אראלים (*er'ellim*), *Erelim*, as a *notariqon* of אלהים וארא מראות (*va-er'eh mar'ot elohim*), *I saw visions of God*, because of their similar sound.

In the verse from Isaiah, the meaning of the term אראלם (*er'ellam*) is unclear; it has sometimes been translated "their valiant ones, their brave men," referring to the Judeans withstanding Sennacherib's onslaught. (See Isaiah 29:1–2; *ABD*, s.v. "Ariel.") In rabbinic tradition, the word *er'ellam* is transformed into אראלים (*er'ellim*), meaning "angels" or a group of angels, while in medieval angelology they constitute one of ten such classes.

On the quality of Ezekiel's vision, see Rashi on 1:1: "Since he did not see through a speculum that shines, he refers to this as *visions*—like a dream, insubstantial." See Vol. 11, p. 59, n. 88. On the *Erelim*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 56:5; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:23; BT *Ḥagigah* 5b, *Ketubbot* 104a; *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 33:22; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:7; *Zohar* 1:120a, 182a, 210a; 2:2b, 43a (*RM*), 195b–196a; *ZḤ* 37d, 88a (*MhN, Rut*), 92c (*MhN, Eikhah*); *Orḥot Tsaddiqim*, 26; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:23, n. 64; 5:417, n. 117.

The verse in Isaiah reads in full: *Behold, the Erelim cried outside; angels of peace, weep bitterly.*

16. **two wailings…** The trauma of the destruction extends to the angels, who lament for two reasons: once for

their own exile and a second time for the dissolution of peace in the celestial and human realms.

17. **Israel received the Torah…** The force of the covenant that was established when God addressed the Jewish nation and said *I am* became explicit when they were exiled from the land. At that time *Shekhinah* accompanied them, executing the promise of Isaiah 49:15.

On the *fifth day of the month*, see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 6b, in the name of Rav Shema'yah: "*Shavu'ot* sometimes occurs on the fifth of Sivan, sometimes on the sixth of Sivan, and sometimes on the seventh."

On the *fifth*, see Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 49: "On the *fifth*—actually!—since She [*Shekhinah*] is the mystery of the final *he* of the tetragrammaton that descended with Israel into exile. And this is the meaning of *the fifth year of the exile of King* יויכין (*Yoyakhin*), *Joyachin*. It does not say יהויכין (*Yehoyakhin*), *Jehoiachin*, but rather *Yoyakhin* since ה (*he*) already went into exile…."

On God's not forgetting Israel, see BT *Berakhot* 32b. On *Anokhi* as a name for *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:87b, 211a, 228a; 2:85a–b, 90b–91a, 224b, 236b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 380–81; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod* on *Berakhot* 6b, p. 4b–c; Recanati on Exodus 20:2. Cf. Ibn Ezra on Genesis 27:19; *Bahir* 32 (49).

On *Shekhinah* going into exile, see BT *Megillah* 29a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them…. When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them…. And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them."

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14; *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Ta'anit* 1:1, 64a; *Eikhah Rabbah*, Petiḥta 34, 1:54; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:16; 23:5; *Zohar* 1:68b–69a, 120b, 134a, 149a, 159b, 182a, 211a, 222a; 2:2a–b, 41b (*Piq*), 82a, 189b, 216b; 3:2b,

6a–b, 74a–b, 114b–115a, 199a, 297b; *ZḤ* 47d (*MhN, Rut*), 65b (*ShS*), 77b, 80d, 84a (last three *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 73–74 (92–93); idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:382–85.

18. **day of fifty gates…** Ezekiel's chariot vision recalls the revelation at Sinai, as commemorated on the Festival of *Shavu'ot*, because when Israel received the Torah, thousands of angels descended in chariots upon Mount Sinai. Rabbi El'azar interprets *the fifth* as an allusion to the fifty gates of understanding that were opened on that day.

The trope of "fifty gates" is based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu'el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): "Fifty gates of *binah*, understanding, were created in the world, and all were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)."

On *Shavu'ot* and Ezekiel's vision, see above, note 1. On the chariots at Sinai, see Rashi on *Megillah* 31a, s.v. *ba-merkavah*, building on Psalms 68:18: *The chariots of God, myriads upon myriads, thousands of thousands. The Master among them—O, Sinai in holiness!* Cf. *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tsav* 16; *Midrash Tehillim* on 68:10.

"Rested" renders רפיד (*rafid*), "reclining, seated," following CM1 and Venice. Mn1, Cin1, and L40 read: רדיפו (*radifu*), "chased, pursued."

19. **heaven and earth were created conditionally…** See M *Avot* 1:2; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:1; and BT *Shabbat* 88a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "The blessed Holy One stipulated a condition with the works of Creation, saying to them: 'If Israel accepts the Torah, you will endure. If not, I will return you to *chaos and void* (Genesis 1:2).'"

20. **revealed on this day alone…** The extraordinary quality of Ezekiel's vision could have occurred only on this specific day, as indicated in Ezekiel 1:1, for it was precisely

on that day that the blessed Holy One recalled the assembly at Mount Sinai.

21. **היה היה (*Hayoh hayah*), *Happening it happened…*** This phrase combines the infinitive and finite forms of the verb "to be." Its simple sense is *It happened*, but Rabbi El'azar focuses on the double form, suggesting that each of these verbs has its own referent: a previous prophecy in the land of Israel, and a subsequent one in the land of the Chaldeans. The fact that Ezekiel had already received prophecy in the land of Israel authorized his prophecy beyond its borders.

See *Targum Yonatan*; Rashi; Radak. On the sanction for Ezekiel's revealing his vision, see above, note 4. On the meaning of *hayoh hayah*, see *Zohar* 1:85a, 149a; 2:2a–b, 5a (*MhN*), 82a–b; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58–59; Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel," 602–4.

22. **Affirmation upon affirmation** An emphatic authorization.

23. **holy name אהיה (*Ehyeh*)…** When Moses asks God at the burning bush for His name, God replies, אהיה אשר אהיה (*Ehyeh asher ehyeh*), *I will be who I will be* [or: *I am who I am*] (Exodus 3:14). Here, this name is considered supreme and it accompanies Israel into exile—but in a diminished form, lacking the initial א (*alef*). To compensate, the remaining form of the name appears twice in Ezekiel's prophecy, assuring continued protection.

See BT *Berakhot* 9b: "אהיה אשר אהיה (*Ehyeh asher ehyeh*), *I will be who I will be*. The blessed Holy One said to Moses, 'Go and tell Israel, "I was with you in this enslavement, and I will be with you in the enslavement of the kingdoms [in the future.]"'"

The full verse in Exodus (in which God responds to Moses' request to reveal the divine name) reads: *God said to Moses, "*אהיה אשר אהיה (*Ehyeh asher ehyeh*), *I will be who I will be." He said, "Thus shall you say to the Children of Israel*:

‘*Ehyeh, I am, has sent me to you*.’” On this name, see *Zohar* 3:11a, 65a–b.

24. **על נהר (*al Nahar*), *upon the River…*** Through wordplay, Rabbi El’azar builds on the similarity of the Hebrew word *nahar*, “river,” and the Aramaic word *nehora*, “light,” showing that the lack of *alef* from the divine name אהיה (*Ehyeh*), is also missing in the description of the prophetic vision’s site. Thus, the subject of Ezekiel’s vision was the light of *Ḥesed*—the *sefirah* that is symbolized by the missing *alef*.

Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:3, in the name of Rabbi Yudan (and Theodor’s note).

25. ***hand of YHVH…*** Why does the same verse say first that the *word of YHVH* came to Ezekiel, and then that the *hand of YHVH* came upon him? And, why did the prophecy occur *there*, next to a river in exile? Rabbi El’azar responds first by suggesting that the declining sequence of the two terms (*word* being superior to a single *hand*) indicates the diminished quality of the prophecy. Then he adds that, actually, both terms signify *Shekhinah*, referring to the same rung of prophecy. Rejecting this explanation, El’azar offers a different rationale, saying that this was an inappropriate place for revelation of *Shekhinah* since it was outside the land of Israel, occurring only on account of the blessed Holy One’s desire to comfort the people of Israel. And, indeed, the verse was uttered by Holy Spirit, formally authorizing Ezekiel’s prophecy. In Scripture, the *hand of YHVH* is a manifestation of God’s power, interpreted here as a diminished form of divine expression or divine validation of the prophecy.

On Holy Spirit as speaking the first line, see Rashi on Ezekiel 1:1. On the absence of Divinity in this verse, cf. Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58–59. On the meaning of God’s hand, see *Targum Yonatan*; Rashi; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 49; Greenberg. On this passage, see *Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. *Sullam*. On Ezekiel’s

prophecy as comfort for the people of Israel, see Radak on Ezekiel 1:1; Meroz, “Merkevet Yeḥezqel,” 604, 606.

26. **Up to this point…** The first three verses describe the setting of Ezekiel’s prophecy. What follows is the content of the revelation.

27. ***I looked…*** The full verse reads: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of amber, from within the fire*.

In Kabbalah the first four elements mentioned by Ezekiel (*stormy wind, great cloud*, *flashing fire, radiance*) represent four demonic shells surrounding the kernel of holiness, which is identified with *amber*.

On Ezekiel’s vision and the shells, see *Zohar* 2:81b–82a, 203a–b; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 59–60; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 49–51; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:463–64, 509.

28. **it is not written ואראה (*Va-er’eh*)…** The first *he* of the tetragrammaton represents *Binah*—who has departed, so that only an inferior vision remains possible.

Grammatically, the form without the final *he* is the expected form because verbs whose last root letter is weak, such as ראה (*r’h*), are usually apocopated when preceded by a so-called conversive ו (*vav*), yielding ואר֫א (*Va-ere*), without the final *he*. However, some instances use the longer form, as is found in Ezekiel 1:1.

On the missing *he*, see Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 59; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 49. Cf. Meroz, “Merkevet Yeḥezqel,” 602–3; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 348. On seeing from behind a screen, see Maimonides, *Shemonah Peraqim*, 7; *Zohar* 1:232b (*Tos*) (Vol. 11, p. 616, n. 40); 2:69a–b, 82a–b, 130b, 213a; 3:174b; *ZḤ* 15c (*MhN*), 39d; Vol. 10, p. 552. On this passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:492–93.

29. ***stormy wind…*** See BT *Ḥagigah* 13b, in the name of Rav: “[The *stormy wind*] went to conquer the whole world

under the wicked Nebuchadnezzar [king of Babylon], And why all this? So that the nations of the world would not say: 'The blessed Holy One delivered His children into the hand of a lowly nation.'" See BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; Rashi and Qara on Ezekiel 1:4; *Zohar* 2:203a. Cf. Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 11.

30. ***not in the wind*—actually!...** Ezekiel has a vision of a chariot and Elijah ascends upon a chariot into heaven, so Rabbi El'azar links the two prophets by identifying their common images of stormy wind and fire in the verses from Ezekiel and Kings as shells. The simple meaning of the verses in Kings attests to the ironically modest revelation of God within the *small, murmuring voice*. In that context, the denial of God's presence within the terrifying natural phenomena (earthquake and fire) emphasizes that they are *qelippot*, "shells"—demonic entities, rather than holy ones.

The context in 1 Kings (19:11–12), describing Elijah's encounter with God, reads: *Behold, YHVH was passing by, and a great, mighty wind, tearing out* [or: *splitting*], *mountains and smashing rocks before YHVH. After the wind—an earthquake; YHVH was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake—fire; YHVH was not in the fire. After the fire—a small, murmuring voice*. Elijah's experience occurs in a cave at Horeb (also called Sinai), thematically paralleling that of Moses at Sinai in Exodus 33:13–23, thus tightening the links between Elijah, Moses, and Ezekiel.

Flashing fire renders אש מתלקחת (*esh mitlaqaḥat*), an obscure image, which was also used to describe the fire within the hail that fell upon Egypt (Exodus 10:24).

31. **shells of the kernel...** The first three shells are like the layers of an onion, one within the other. The last, *nogah*, *radiance*, is closest to the kernel of holiness within.

The various shells surrounding the kernel are derived from Ezekiel's vision. See above, note 27. On shell and kernel, see also *Zohar* 1:19b–20a (Vol. 1, p. 151, n. 341); 2:130b–131a, 140b, 147b, 233b. On shell within shell, see

Zohar 2:131a, 140b; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 59. Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:2.

32. **four kingdoms…** That subjugated Israel, namely Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome (signified by Edom). The Greek kingdom and the fourth shell, *radiance*, both come close to the holiness of the kernel, but their advantage does not extend to the other kingdoms or shells, respectively. Rabbinic texts often use "Edom" as a symbol for the Roman Empire and Christendom, which perpetuate the contemporary exile.

The statement about the superiority of Greece matches one in *Zohar* 2:237a, which describes Greece as being "near to the paths of faith." See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 62–63, which indicates that before Aristotle, Greek sages were "close to the path of truth." These various statements seem to imply a correlation between elements of Kabbalah and Neoplatonic writings, which circulated in the Middle Ages under an ancient guise. This positive appraisal of Greek wisdom also reflects traditional rabbinic approval of Greek as an exalted language. On the esteem for the Greek language, see M *Megillah* 1:8; BT *Megillah* 9a–b.

On the four kingdoms, see Daniel 2, 7; *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 9; *Bereshit Rabbah* 41:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 13:5; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:5; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 5:15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Terumah* 6, *Tazri'a* 16; *Tanḥuma, Terumah* 7; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 28; *Midrash Tehillim* on 5:6, 18:10, 22:9, 80:6; *Zohar* 2:81b, 237a; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 50–51; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:223, n. 82; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:117, n. 369; Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary*, 80–97. On the *radiance* and the kernel, see *Zohar* 2:203b; cf. *Zohar* 1:13a (Vol. 1, pp. 92–93, n. 699). On Edom as a representation of Christendom, see Cohen, "Esau as Symbol"; Yuval, *Two Nations*.

33. **four kingdoms alternate…** Apparently loosening the identification of *nogah, radiance*, with Greece, here the

four shells jockey for the innermost position, to absorb divine overflow from *nogah*.

34. **החשמל (*ha-ḥashmal*)...** The precise meaning of the term is unclear, but the context in Ezekiel indicates a bright substance. It has been rendered *amber, gleaming amber*, or *glowing metal*; in the Septuagint it is translated as *elektron*, and in the Vulgate as *electrum*. In postbiblical literature it was regarded as endowed with holy and dangerous properties. In the *Zohar*, it represents a kernel of holiness that is surrounded by the four demonic husks or shells.

See above, note 31. The Akkadian term *elmesu*—referring to a precious stone—may be a cognate for *ḥashmal*, and it often appears in mythical contexts, such as "[Nergal's] upper cheeks are *elmesu*; his lower cheeks flash constantly like lightning." See Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 45.

35. **fiery beings speaking...** Here, חשמל (*ḥashmal*) is interpreted as a *notariqon*, an acronymic abbreviation of ממללן חיון אשא (*ḥeivan esha memallelan*), "fiery beings speaking." In Ezekiel's vision, the four *ḥayyot, living beings* (see below, note 38), carry the divine chariot-throne. The vision is so baffling that no one who beholds it can truly comprehend it. "This, not this" expresses the profound impossibility of defining its precise nature.

On this interpretation of *ḥashmal*, see BT *Ḥagigah* 13a–b: "What is *ḥashmal*? Rav Yehuda said, 'חיות אש ממללות (*ḥayyot esh memallelot*), speaking creatures of fire.' It was taught in a *baraita*: Sometimes חשות (*ḥashot*), they are silent; sometimes ממללות (*memallelot*), they speak. When speech emerges from the mouth of the blessed Holy One, *ḥashot*, they are silent; and when speech does not emerge from the mouth of the blessed Holy One, *memallelot*, they speak." See *Targum Yonatan* on Ezekiel 1:24–25.

On the *ḥashmal*, see *Zohar* 2:81b, 247a (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 60; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 52, 76. On this passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:619.

36. **greatest of all…** Prophets attain the highest rank of humanity, but even then they can barely ascertain the nature or meaning of the *ḥashmal*.

See BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque speculum [or: mirror, glass], whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a translucent speculum." The phrase "an opaque speculum" renders אספקלריא שאינה מאירה (*ispaqlarya she-einah me'irah*), "an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine." The phrase "a translucent speculum" renders אספקלריא המאירה (*ispaqlarya ha-me'irah*), "an *ispaqlarya* that shines." The word *ispaqlarya* derives from Greek *speklon*, "mirror, window-pane," and Latin *speculum*, "mirror."

On the physical experience of prophecy, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Yesodei ha-Torah* 7:1–2: "When the spirit rests upon him, his soul becomes intermingled with the rung of angels called *ishim*, and he is transformed into a different person. He will understand that his knowledge is different than before, having risen above the level of other wise men…. When any of them prophesy, their limbs tremble, their physical strength falters, they lose control of their senses, but their minds are free to comprehend what they see, as is said concerning Abraham: *And here, terror and great darkness falling upon him* (Genesis 15:12). Similarly, it says in the book of Daniel (10:8): [*So I was left alone to see this great vision*…] *my vigor was destroyed, and I could not summon up strength*." On the superiority of the prophet, see Maimonides, *Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin* 10 (introduction). On the overwhelming experience of revelation and Moses' distinctiveness, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 357; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:4; Maimonides, *Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin* 10:1; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 7:6; idem, *Guide of the Perplexed*, 2:35–38; *Zohar* 1:170b–171a; 3:133a (*IR*), 201a, 268b–269a, 284b.

On the ineffability of the vision, see Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 60: "The most precise explanation of

חש מל (*ḥash mal*) is that this is a secret matter of internal luminousness in the mystery that every intelligible entity sparks momentarily and disappears, utterly inapprehensible—a luminosity denied, without a garment. Therefore it is called *ḥash mal*, silent speaking, since it flashes momentarily within the heart and instantaneously disappears."

On "master of the house" (applied to both Jacob and Moses), see *Zohar* 1:21b, 138b, 152b, 156b (*ST*), 236b, 239a; 2:22b, 78b, 235b, 238b, 244b (*Heikh*); 3:163b. Cf. 2:99b. See Numbers 12:7: *Not so My servant Moses; in all My house he is trusted*.

37. **a single spark shoots out...** Four sparks launch from the *ḥashmal*, symbolizing angelic beings below. The sparks speaking to each other recalls Isaiah's vision of the angels: *One* [*seraph*] *would call to the other: Holy, holy, holy is YHVH of Hosts! The whole earth is full of His glory!* (Isaiah 6:3). When the sparks resume their original position among the creatures, the prophet who was viewing them is confounded again.

See Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 52; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

"Vision" renders חיזו (*ḥeizu*), "appearance," but in the *Zohar* it can also mean "mirror" (or "speculum, looking-glass, lens"). This added sense may be borrowed from the Hebrew word מראה (*mar'ah*), which means both "vision" and "mirror." See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 28.

On the "living beings," see next note.

38. **mystery abiding within the kernel...** The four "living beings" themselves constitute the kernel, which is both garbed within the appearance of the *ḥashmal* and surrounded by the shells.

Living beings renders חיות (*ḥayyot*), literally "animals," but here it takes on a more mysterious or vague meaning, given these creatures' strange nature. In Ezekiel 10:15, the prophet identifies the *ḥayyot* with cherubim. On the nature,

appearance, and function of the cherubim, see Exodus 25:18–22, 37:7–9; 1 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 22:11; 1 Kings 6:23–28, 8:6–7; Halperin, *Faces of the Chariot*, 39–41.

The full verse reads: *From within it, a likeness of four living beings, and this was their appearance: they had the image of a human*.

39. ***ḥashmal* is masculine...** In theosophic Kabbalah, gender is assigned to *sefirot* and celestial entities according to their role as active or passive actors. Thus, the flow of emanation is from masculine to feminine actors, with the masculine agents described here as "ruling." Since the "living beings" are ruled over by the feminine *Malkhut*, they are referred to as feminine themselves and constitute the feminine *ḥashmalah*.

On the gender of the *ḥashmal*, cf. Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 60; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 52; David Luria on *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4, n. 17.

40. **Likeness of the supernal creatures...** Zoharic Kabbalah speaks of two chariots: one that Ezekiel sees with its four creatures that supports *Malkhut*; and one that is described as "supernal" and "hidden," alluding to the *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*—who together support the three highest *sefirot*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6, in the name of Resh Lakish: "The patriarchs themselves constitute the [divine] Chariot." The kabbalists of Gerona added King David as the fourth support of the chariot.

On the two chariots, see *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 21a, 71b–72a, 196b, 211a; 2:48b, 242a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:588–90; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 60–61; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 72; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 7–8. Cf. Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 53–54.

On the patriarchs as comprising the chariot, see above, note 7.

41. **called דמות (*demut*), *likeness*...** Why does Scripture use two terms?

See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:1.

42. **souls... fly out...** Detailing the itinerary of souls as they proceed from supernal realms to prepare for their entry to this world. They travel from their origin in *Binah* (who is signified by "the river that flows from Eden"), emerge from the masculine *Tif'eret*, and journey toward *Malkhut* (who is referred to as "the One who takes them"). Progressing downward, each soul takes on a garment of physicality—a body—that resembles their spiritual makeup, in the place called *Demut*, which is the location of the four "living beings" contained within *Malkhut*.

On the site of origin of human souls, see *Bahir* 14 (22), 67 (98); *Zohar* 1:12b–13b, 76b, 81a–b (last two *ST*), 82b, 113b (*MhN*), 205b–206a, 209a; 2:99b, 223b, 246a, 259a (last two *Heikh*); 3:170a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:679–80, 692–98.

On souls as "fruit," see *Bahir* 14 (22); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 489, 504; *Zohar* 1:15b, 19a, 33a, 59b–60a, 82b, 85b, 90b, 115a–b, 226b, 238a, 249a; 2:166b–167a, 223b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 51; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 56 (69). Cf. Ibn Ezra on Psalms 1:3.

43. **דמות (*demut*), *likeness*, generates a likeness...** The problem of the apparent redundancy of terms *demut* and *tselem* is resolved: *tselem* signifies the masculine aspect of resemblance that derives from the supernal "living beings," within the masculine potency of Divinity, called here Creature. *Demut* alludes to the feminine aspect of resemblance derived from the living creatures that support the chariot below *Malkhut*. On account of their lower rung, these creatures have a feminine name, *ḥayyot*. Since they number four, they allude to the four directions—and thus symbolize all spatial dimension in this world, as well as overseeing all angelic beings. The lower cohort, called

demut, manifests those above as well as the spatial, angelic, and human spiritual realities below. Thus the single term *demut* suffices for them all here in the book of Ezekiel.

On *tselem* and *demut*, see Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 53. On this passage, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. In the *Zohar*, the singular term Creature usually signifies *Malkhut*, but here it refers to *Tif'eret*. Cf. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §406: "There is one *ḥayyah* (living being) there whose name is Israel." On this formulation, see *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:39, 6:49); *Zohar* 2:4b (*MhN*); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:307, n. 253; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 62.

44. **מראיהן (*mar'eihen*), *their appearance*...** The form מראיהן (*mar'eihen*), *their appearance*, alludes to מראה (*mar'ah*), "mirror," namely *Shekhinah*, who is known as "the speculum that does not shine." Ezekiel gazed upon the supernal creatures through the looking-glass called *Shekhinah*; and on account of their recondite nature, they had to be displayed before the prophet. This explains the use of the demonstrative pronoun זה (*zeh*), *this was*, as emphasizing the vision's exhibitive purpose.

See BT *Menaḥot* 29a: "It was taught in the school of Rabbi Yishma'el: Three things were too difficult for Moses until the blessed Holy One showed him with His finger, namely [how to construct] the lamp stand [in the Dwelling], [how to recognize precisely] the new moon, and [how to determine which] creeping things [are pure and impure]." With regard to each of these commandments, Scripture specifies: *This is*....

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; *Sifrei*, Numbers 61; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:14; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 6, 8; *Beha'alotekha* 3, 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 11; *Beha'alotekha* 4, 11; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:4, 10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 78a; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:28; *Zohar* 2:140b, 157b–158a (*RM*), 221a, 241a; Roitman, "Sacred Language and Open Text."

45. **how could this one…** Ezekiel's extraordinary vision—both in terms of content and the fact that it occurred outside the land of Israel—exercised the ancient rabbis and medieval commentators. Here, Rabbi El'azar explains that Ezekiel was able to perceive what he did only because of a special influx of prophetic spirit; secondly, he was granted his prophecy outside the land only on account of the blessed Holy One's compassion for the people of Israel's suffering.

On the overwhelming experience of revelation and Moses' distinctiveness, see above, note 36.

46. **vision perceived through a whisper…** The non-visible upper *ḥayyot* become manifest through *Malkhut*, which is signified by "the celestial mirror." All the *sefirot* derive from the "upper voice" and are encompassed in the "lower voice" below, in *Malkhut*. The transformative prophetic experience is described as synesthesia, a convergence of sensory phenomena, "a vision perceived through a whisper," transforming the prophet into a mirror, shining like the luminosity he perceives. Like the creatures who are sometimes silent and sometimes speaking, even the divine voice proceeds in a whisper, which is then described by the prophet.

On synesthesia, see above, p. 422, n. 19.

47. זה **(*Zeh*), *This…*** The demonstrative pronoun signifies *Tif'eret*, "speculum that shines." Reading hyperliterally, the two words *zeh mar'eihen* indicate that the *appearance* of the living beings is perceptible only through the supernal mirror called *Zeh*.

Cf. Moses de León and Joseph Gikatilla, who identify *zeh* with *Yesod*. See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 61; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 54–55; above, note 44.

48. ***Ḥashmal*—four sparks…** Apparently referring to the upper *ḥayyot* (*Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*), whose coalescence forms the *ḥashmal*. These "four sparks" and their commingling is an interpretation of Ezekiel 1:6: *they each*

had four faces. The living creatures supporting the chariot below also intermingle, paralleling the array above. These angelic beings are posted in the four spatial directions, while also being embraced by their counterparts on the opposite sides.

See Meroz, “Merkevet Yeḥezqel,” 609.

49. **a single corpus…** In Ezekiel’s vision, each of the four “living beings” carrying the heavenly throne had four faces: a human face at the front, the face of a lion on the right, the face of a bull on the left, and the face of an eagle at the back. Rabbi El’azar indicates that once the four different sides have been integrated, the three animal faces are somehow included in the human face, as implied in Ezekiel 1:10: *The image of their face was* פני אדם (*penei adam*), *a human face, and on the right the four of them had a lion’s face, and on the left the four of them had a bull’s face, and the four of them had an eagle’s face*.

According to Greenberg (*Ezekiel 1–20*, 45), the peculiar formulation of the verse reflects the sequence of observation. The onlooker (on any side) was confronted by a human face, flanked by two animal faces on its right and left. Finally, from what could be seen on the heads of the rest of the creatures, the onlooker inferred that in back of the human face confronting him was an eagle’s face.

On the association of the creatures with the four directions, see Meroz, “Merkevet Yeḥezqel,” 571–73, 584–85. On the human face either as encompassing the other faces or as their culmination, see *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 71b; 2:80b, 211b; 3:274a; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 59.

50. **the midst of these…** All other angelic beings derive from these four living creatures who support the throne of *Malkhut*, signified by “the point that stands upon them.”

51. ***Adam*—Male and female…** In Zoharic Kabbalah, the term *Adam* signifies the primordial (or restored) union of male and female in both human and divine realms. That

unity is symbolized by ן (final *nun*), whose upper part derives from *vav*, manifesting the Male, with the lower extension symbolizing the Female. The latter is characterized as a "point" that presides over the four creatures that support the throne-chariot. Ultimately, all levels of existence occur in the ideal form, called *Adam*—a male androgyne.

On the need for male and female union, see BT *Yevamot* 63a, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Any אדם (*adam*), man, who has no wife is not an *adam*, as is said: *Male and female He created them… and He named them adam* (Genesis 5:2)."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 9:9; *Midrash Tehillim* 59:2; *Zohar* 1:55b, 182a, 233a–b, 239a, 248a; 2:144b; 3:5a–b, 7a, 17a, 33b–34a, 46b, 74b, 81a–b, 145b, 148a, 283b, 296a (*IZ*).

On the term *Adam* as referring to male and female, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1: "Rabbi Yishma'el son of Naḥman said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous; and He sawed him and gave him two backs, a back on this side and a back on that.' Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him with two faces; and He sawed him and gave him two backs, a back for the male and a back for the female.'"

See Genesis 1:26–27; *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1; BT *Berakhot* 61a, *Eruvin* 18a; *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 2; *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5; *Bahir* 116–17 (172–73); *Zohar* 1:2b, 13b, 34b–35a, 37b, 47a, 55b, 85b, 91b, 165a; 2:55a, 144b, 167b, 176b, 178a–b (last two *SdTs*), 231a–b, 246a (*Heikh*); 3:10b, 19a, 44b, 78a, 83b, 117a, 143b (*IR*), 292b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 72b (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1355–56; Wolfson, "Woman—The Feminine as Other"; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 53–103; Mopsik, *Sex of the Soul*. Cf. Plato, *Symposium* 189d–191d.

On ן (final *nun*) as symbolizing the union of male and female, see *Bahir* 56 (83); *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 147a (*Tos*), 149b (*ST*); 3:66b, 155a, 156b, 285b; *ZḤ* 70a (*ShS*). Cf.

Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 68. On the various levels of *Adam*, see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 56–60; Idel, *Olam ha-Mal'akhim*, 19–73. On the phrase *thousands of thousands*, see next note.

52. **שנאן (*shin'an*), *thousands*...** This word, of uncertain origin and meaning (usually construed as doubling the quantity conveyed by the previous word: *thousands*), is interpreted here as a *notariqon* (acronym) alluding to the four faces of the *ḥayyot*: שור (*shor*), *ox*; נשר (*nesher*), *eagle*; אריה (*aryeh*), *lion*; and finally אדם (*adam*), *human*, which is symbolized by the last letter, ן (final *nun*), whose extended length implies the fullness of male and female. Now, the entirety of sub-sefirotic reality is accounted for by the names *Adam* and *shin'an*: endless instances of *shin'an*—that is, of the chariot, its living creatures, and its riders—are a basic pattern that structures the universe. The reference to the verse in Psalms (cited in full below) links the theophany at Sinai to Ezekiel's vision.

On the term *shin'an*, see BT *Avodah Zarah* 3b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:22; *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 149b (*ST*); 3:274a. On the all-inclusive nature of *Adam*, see Ibn Ezra on Exodus 33:21; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 537; *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 44a (*Heikh*); 2:73a (*RR*), 74a, 80b, 178a (*SdTs*), 211b; 3:48a–b, 60b, 135a (*IR*), 154a, 240b, 241b; *ZḤ* 59a–c (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 61, 68; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 142; idem, *Shushan Edut*, 353; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 56; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 50–51, 53–54. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed*, 3:1; *Zohar* 2:75b. On the superiority of the human face, see BT *Ḥagigah* 13b.

The verse in Psalms reads in full: *The chariots of God, myriads upon myriads, thousands of thousands. The Master among them—O, Sinai in holiness!*

53. **gaze fleetingly...** When the three animal faces look toward their source to receive divine overflow, they are consolidated within the unifying human face. Then they descend to their distinct posts, to disseminate divine bounty.

However, at times the three creaturely faces do not look upward at all; then their separate identities are nullified, and all that can be seen is the all-encompassing human face. In the lower world, this dynamic is expressed by Genesis 9:2: *Fear and dread of you shall be upon every living thing of the earth and upon every bird of the skies, in everything with which the earth teems and in all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are given*.

See *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the creatures' dread of the human, see BT *Shabbat* 151b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 11; *Zohar* 1:13b, 38a (*Heikh*), 54b–55a, 71a, 191a; 2:125b; 3:107b, 117a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 309, 337–38; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:119–20, n. 113. Ezekiel 1:10 is cited in full above, note 49.

54. ***Adam*—essential principle...** The uppermost manifestation of *Adam* is the cluster of *sefirot* that manifests *Tif'eret*, the masculine aspect of Divinity, and that extends from *one end of heaven*, signifying *Binah, to the other end of heaven*, signifying *Malkhut*, with the span itself symbolizing the *sefirot Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. These three are expressed by the three letters of the word אדם (*Adam*), "human." The orthographically closed ם (final *mem*) symbolizes *Binah*. ד (*Dalet*) has the numerical value in *gimatriyyah* of four, and alludes to the four creatures over which *Malkhut* presides; alternatively, ד (*dalet*) signifies דל (*dal*), "lowly one," since *Malkhut* has no light of Her own. Lastly, א (*alef*) is the first letter of the name *Adam*, interpreting its shape symbolically: its central shaft represents the letter *vav*, whose numerical value of six alludes to the middle six *sefirot*; and its upper and lower branches signify its extension to the upper *sefirot* above and to *Malkhut* below. Only the uppermost reaches of Divinity stand above the figure of *Adam*.

The enormous stature of the first human is derived from a hyperliteral reading of the verse from Deuteronomy: *For ask now of primal days that were before you, from the day God created a human on the earth and from the end of the*

heavens to the end of the heavens.... See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1, in the name of Rabbi Yishma'el son of Naḥman: "When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him as an unformed mass, and he extended from one end of the world to the other."

"An infinite ascent" renders לאין סוף (*le-ein sof*), interpreting the phrase *ein sof* adverbially. Alternatively, it could read as "up to *Ein Sof*," treating the term as a reference to the ultimately unknowable One.

On the inscribed letters, cf. Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 65: "Garment of these letters, which are the inner radiance. They are garbed in the mystery of three entities: *face of a lion, face of an ox, face of an eagle*—mystery and disposition of three entities that clothe the inner faces. Indeed, the letters *YHV*—inner mystery of *Adam*."

On the cosmic dimensions of *Adam*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1; 14:8; 21:3; 24:2; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 8, 42; BT *Ḥagigah* 12a, *Sanhedrin* 38b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 11; *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23, 115a; 46, 187b.

55. ***a single rigid leg...*** This renders רגל ישרה (*regel yesharah*); alternatively, *straight leg*(s); *unjointed leg*(s). The gist is a lack of mobility, which appears to be part of the creatures' general lack of orientation, as indicated by their being four-faced. It is unclear whether *regel yesharah* means that both legs were unjointed, or that each creature had only one leg. Here, Rabbi El'azar conjectures that the prophet's gaze moved in a downward trajectory, from creatures' bodies to legs and hooves.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:21, in the name of Rabbi Abin: "It is written: *When they stood still, their wings slackened* (Ezekiel 1:24). And is there sitting above? As Rabbi Ḥanina son of Andarai said in the name of Rabbi Samuel son of Sitir, 'There is no sitting above, as it says: *The legs of each were a single rigid leg* (ibid., 7)! Also, they have no joints, as is written: *I approached one of the qa'amayya* (Daniel 7:16),

which means *those that stand*. Also, *Seraphim were standing above Him* (Isaiah 6:2). Also, *All the host of heaven standing by Him, on His right and on His left* (1 Kings 22:19).' Yet you say *When they stood*!" The implication of *when they stood* is that sometimes they are not standing. Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 15b.

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *The legs of each were a single rigid leg, and the feet of each were like a single calf's hoof, sparkling like the gleam of burnished bronze*. See Rashi; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 44.

56. **sparks of the *ḥashmal*...** As seen above (at note 46), there is an "upper" and "lower" *ḥashmal* (or as described here, an "inner" and "outer" *ḥashmal*). The sparks of the interior *ḥashmal* symbolize the four central *sefirot*—namely *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*; and when the living creatures approach them with their legs held fast together, other beings, also called *ḥashmal*, pour forth. They ascend to receive divine blessing, and descend to apportion it below.

The image of aligned legs apparently derives from the normative rabbinic interpretation of the *rigid* (or *straight*) leg, which is understood as an instruction for statutory prayer: each individual must stand with legs together, as if they were *a single rigid leg*. See BT *Berakhot* 10b, in the name of Rabbi Eliezer son of Ya'akov: "When praying, one should align one's feet next to each other, as is said: *The legs of each were a single rigid leg* (Ezekiel 1:7)." See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:4; Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 106; Caro, *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 95:1.

On the different gradations of *ḥashmal*, see Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 62.

57. ***ḥashmal* surrounds them...** The legs. The meaning here is obscure, but *Matoq mi-Devash* explains the passage sefirotically. The sparks from the legs—alluding to *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*—descend to "Little Earth," which signifies

Shekhinah, where diverse angelic entities distribute divine overflow.

"Crystal" renders the Aramaic בדולחא (*bedulḥa*), which derives from the Hebrew בדולח (*bedolaḥ*), "bdellium." *Bedolaḥ* appears only twice in the Bible, once in the context of the geographical setting of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:12) and once describing the color of the manna (Numbers 11:7) —which is also linked with dew (ibid., 9; Exodus 16:14). *Bedolaḥ* is apparently an aromatic yellowish transparent resin of trees, though a number of ancient and medieval sources identify it as a precious stone. Rashi on Numbers 11:7 describes it as "crystal," and in medieval Hebrew *bedolaḥ* means "pearl" and "crystal." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:2; *Zohar* 1:232a (*Tos*); 2:136b, 176b (*SdTs*); 3:49a, 128b (*IR*), 155b; *ZḤ* 48c.

"Emeralds" renders אבנין דברקת (*avnin de-vareqet*); alternatively, "smaragd, malachite." *Bareqet* is one of the gems in the high priest's breastplate (see Exodus 28:17, 39:10) as well as in the Garden of Eden (see Ezekiel 28:13), but its reference is uncertain. On Exodus 28:17, see Sarna, *Exodus*; Alter, *Five Books*. Cf. below, note 93.

On this passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:619–20.

58. **Gallitsur…** On Gallitsur, see *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 97b; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 47; below, note 60.

59. **sparks for the four sides…** The *ḥashmal* sends its glow to four sides below, causing the emission of a "sound" (or "voice") from between the wings of the living creatures. This sound, too, splits into four that resonate below. Each aspect of Ezekiel's multi-sensory experience is ramified by a multiple of four; thus, the four living beings reverberate as four sparks and four sounds.

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, like the sound of Shaddai, as they moved. A sound of tumult like the sound of*

an army camp. When they stood still, their wings slackened [or: *drooped*].

60. **aroused in that voice…** The divine glow is now expressed as "voice," extending down into the angelic realm, and received by Gallitsur. The angel's name means "Revealed by the Rock," making him the fitting recipient of heavenly secrets.

61. **Ana'el…** The cluster of images here (purple, east, and the number six) are all associated, within the *sefirot*, with *Tif'eret*, indicating that Ana'el serves in the lower realm that parallels *Tif'eret* above.

The name ענאל (*Ana'el*) means "God answered." See *Midrash Tehillim* 68:10; *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 37 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:40); *Zohar* 1:108a (Tos), 149b (*ST*); 2:202a; *ZḤ* 90c (*MhN, Rut*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 161–62.

62. **voice is aroused…** In Zoharic Kabbalah, "Voice" normally alludes to *Tif'eret*, which—through downward emanation—becomes the articulate "Utterance" (or "Speech"), signifying *Malkhut*. When Utterance descends and encounters Ana'el, there is a further revelation of 365 divine secrets, alluding to mysteries encompassed by the totality of time, as signified by the completion of the days of the solar year.

63. **light inscribed within the Ineffable Name…** Sandalfon uses the primordial light that is implanted in the Divine Name of Forty-Two Letters to embellish the space between the two supernal Earths—Little Earth and Purple Earth. This is the heavenly paradigm for King Solomon's Temple, where Solomon covered the span from floor to ceiling with cedar. Cedar renders ארז (*erez*), whose letters resemble the word רז (*raz*), "secret" (or "mystery"). Thus the grandeur of the place of worship is adorned with the light of esoteric mystery. Sandalfon is the bearer of these mysteries as well. In Kabbalah, the act of insertion of a foot into a sandal is a metaphorical euphemism for sexual union.

In this rendering, the foot carries the influx from "foundation" and "torso," which generally symbolize *Yesod* and *Tif'eret*, respectively.

The Name of Forty-Two Letters is mentioned in the name of Rav, though not recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. Jacob ben Meir Tam (Rabbenu Tam) was the first to suggest that this name consists of the first forty-two letters of the Torah. See above, p. 381, n. 27. On the two Earths, see above, notes 57, 61.

The name Sandalfon is similar to the Greek *sunadelphas*, meaning one who has siblings or is part of a group. Usually, following Daniel 12:1, Michael is identified as the chief archon. See *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*); 2:209b; 3:121b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 25a (*MhN*); below, p. 641, n. 372.

On the association of *erez* and *raz*, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the sexual symbolism of feet, see Ruth 3:4, 7–8, 14; BT *Berakhot* 23a; *Zohar* 3:308b (*Tosafot*); *ZḤ* 72d (*ShS*); Wolfson, "Images of God's Feet," 164–73; idem, "Walking as a Sacred Duty," 242–43, n. 118.

The simple meaning of the verse in Kings reads in full: *The Court of the Throne, where he meted out justice, the Court of Justice, did he make, and it was paneled in cedarwood from floor to floor* [or, following the Septuagint: *roof-beams*].

64. **this one ties wreaths...** See BT *Ḥagigah* 13b, where it is reported that Sandalfon "stands behind the Chariot, binding crowns for his Lord." This extended narrative interpreting *a single rigid leg* concludes with a flourish, indicating how the congregation's prayers play an essential role in enabling Sandalfon to perform his duties. Luminous letters emblazoned within Sandalfon rise up into the prayer-wreaths that he ties for the blessed Holy One, all basking within the Divine Name.

On Sandalfon tying wreaths for God, see *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *ve-qosher*; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 97a; *Zohar* 1:37b, 167b; 2:58a, 202b, 246a (*Heikh*); Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-*

Merkavah, 65–66; Recanati on Genesis 19:27, 26a; Green, *Keter*, 37–38. Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 21:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 495; Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 118–19; *Zohar* 1:132a, 168b–169a; 2:146b, 209a.

65. ***a single straight leg…*** The creatures appear with a single straight leg to emphasize their unity of purpose, expressed in their dedication to holy fraternity and their aversion to demonic forces that hover near the body's nether parts. The legs correspond to the "known rungs"—particular gradations within the angelic realm. All lower angelic forces that are generated by the living creatures' legs resemble legs themselves.

On the straight leg, see above, note 55; Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 105; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 62. On the creatures' unity, see Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 48.

"Company" renders רגשה (*rigshah*), "crowd." See Psalms 64:3, where the term refers to a *crowd of evil-doers*. Both "upright" and "straight" render the term מישר (*meishar*).

66. **they lack toes…** Humans have digits on both their hands and feet, symbolizing holy and demonic powers, but the creatures bearing the chariot have hooves; and the lack of toes further signifies their unassailable holiness. Notwithstanding the appearance of a calf's hoof, reminiscent of the sin of the Golden Calf manufactured by the Israelites in the desert, that appendage is joined to the larger ensemble of holy creatures—the "bonding of this side and that side."

The lower appendage only appears to be a calf's foot; it does not bear the full demonic potential of an actual calf's hoof. This paradox reflects the tension at the border between the holiness above and demonic below, as well as the author's interpretation of Ezekiel's own ambivalence about describing the divine realm.

Cf. Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 61–63.

67. **base for the Other Side…** Here the text offers the alternative position, that the Other Side does indeed have a connection to the creatures since their feet resemble a calf's hoof. The tension between the two approaches to the possible presence of the demonic within the upper realm is resolved by conceding the presence of a calf's hoof while denying that it plays a demonic role. The supernal appearance is not borne out as a diabolical manifestation below.

According to rabbinic sources, Israel worshiped the Golden Calf as an imitation of the bull in the divine chariot. See *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 21: "The blessed Holy One said to him [Moses], '… I see them coming to Sinai and receiving My Torah, and I descend on Sinai in My chariot of four animals, on which they gaze, and they unhitch one of them and thus arouse My anger'—as is said: *the face of a bull* [or: *an ox*] *on the left…* (Ezekiel 1:10), and it is written: *They exchanged their glory for the image of a bull* (Psalms 106:20)." Here, Rabbi El'azar associates the bull with the demonic power, which originates from the left side.

On the relation between the Golden Calf and the image of the bull in the divine chariot, see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:29; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:2; 4:3; 42:5; 43:8; *Midrash Tehillim* 106:6; Naḥmanides on Exodus 32:1; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:52–53, n. 271; Lieberman, in Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 122–23, n. 24; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 183–84. On the demonic nature of the ox (or bull), see *Zohar* 1:166b, 172b; 2:6a, 64b–65a, 191a, 236b–237a, 240b; 3:86b, 163b, 186a, 207a.

68. **Within that company…** The left side is domesticated by the joint activity of the cohort of living creatures, sending out a spark and flame toward that side together. To perform the will of the blessed Holy One on earth, these celestial entities—called "legs"—take on the earthly appearance of legs. In order for angels (or other

ethereal entities) to descend into this world, they must take on aspects of the material world as garments. After performing their daily tasks in this world, these beings ascend to the heavens, where they extol the blessed Holy One with song.

See *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the garments of spiritual entities, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 18:1; *Zohar* 1:34a–b, 38b (*Heikh*), 58a, 81a (*ST*), 90b, 98b (*ST*), 101a, 144a, 219a; 2:197a, 229b, 231a; 3:126b, 152a, 155b, 208a; *ZḤ* 48c (*MhN*), 81b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 316–17; idem, *She'elot u-Teshuvot*, 38; [idem?], *Seder Gan Eden*, 133, 137; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 27 (32), 61 (75); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 13, 94. Cf. Philo, *On Abraham*, 22:113; *Zohar* 2:61b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 395.

69. ***a human face…*** The human face lies at the most hidden core of all the creatures' faces. Indeed all faces below are also generated by the similitude of a human face within the recondite *ḥashmal* of Ezekiel's vision. Its existence cannot be fully apprehended; thus it is "existent and non-existent."

"Striking" renders קולפין (*qulfin*), deriving from *qulpa*, "club, truncheon, cudgel." See Vol. 11, pp. 574–75, n. 87.

70. **a single compact…** Emerging from the central human face are various forces that not only are linked in a harmonious accord, but also align with symbols of the *sefirot*: "light" corresponding to *Ḥesed*; "fire," to *Gevurah*; רוחא (*ruḥa*), "wind," to *Tif'eret*; and the "impression," with its multiple colors, to *Malkhut*.

"Impression" renders סוטרא (*sutra*), which may be based on סורטא (*surta*), "scratch, mark," or on סיטרא (*sitra*), "side, hem, fold." See *Zohar* 1:132b (Vol. 2, p. 244, n. 322); 3:63b (Vol. 7, p. 417, n. 184), 130a (*IR*); *ZḤ* 1b (*SO*) (above, p. 371, n. 2); *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 183; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *sutra*.

71. **Color of the hidden light…** Elaborating further, these are the three energies that pulse through the human face, and extending through all faces. Light and fire are represented as opposites since the former reveals whereas the latter destroys. They are joined together by *ruḥa*, "a breeze," wafting. This breeze derives from a hidden gem, apparently alluding to the energy that corresponds to *Binah*.

"Irreconcilable" renders אתישבן (*ityashvan*), "settle, dwell," following the printed texts. MN1, CM1, Cin1, J1, and V all read אתיאשן (*itya'ashan*), deriving from יאש (*ya'ash*), "despair, resign." The repeated use of the term makes the latter reading very obscure, and seemingly self-contradictory, hence the choice of the version found in the later texts.

On the twelve spices, see *Zohar* 2:210a; cf. *Zohar* 2:117a (*RM*), 132a.

72. **Then that breeze… is tinted…** Finally, the forces of light and fire are harmonized, and then they intermingle within the balancing breeze. The different energies reach their ultimate expression when manifesting the *human face* (Ezekiel 1:10) and its color, which are united within the throne, signifying the aspect of *Malkhut*.

On the all-inclusive nature of *Adam*, see above, note 52.

73. **When they gaze toward…** See Ezekiel 1:12: *Each could move in the direction of any of its faces; wherever the spirit would go, they went, without turning when they moved*. Each of the four directions corresponds to a particular sefirotic influence. Thus, turning to the east indicates that *Tif'eret* prevails; to the south, *Ḥesed*; to the north, *Gevurah*; and to the west, *Malkhut*. The principle of uniformity that is operative among the creatures dictates that in whichever direction they move, they all present the same face. The eagle, alluding to *Malkhut*, always longs to fly heavenward, signifying *Tif'eret*.

See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 66. On the alignment of the creatures with *sefirot* and the four directions, see Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel," 582–83.

The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *Like an eagle rousing his nest, hovering over his fledglings, He spread His wings, He took him, bearing him on His pinion*.

74. ***the four of them…*** The verse in Ezekiel reads in full: *The image of their face was a human face, and on the right the four of them had a lion's face, and on the left the four of them had a bull's face, and the four of them had an eagle's face*. Here, the bull is left out of the listing, apparently to avoid evoking the sin of the Golden Calf.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 13b: "One verse states *The image of their face was a human face, and on the right the four of them had a lion's face, and on the left the four of them had a bull's face* (Ezekiel 1:10). And it is written: *Each one had four faces: The face of one was the face of a cherub, and the face of the second was the face of a human, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle* (Ezekiel 10:14), but it does not include a bull. Resh Lakish said, 'Ezekiel requested mercy with regard to it, and had it turned into a cherub. He said before Him, "Master of the Universe! Shall an accuser become a defender?"'"

See also *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 23: "For the sake of Israel, God erased the bull and put a cherub in its place, since one finds that Scripture mentions only the cherub, as is written: *The face of one was the face of a cherub* (Ezekiel 10:14). What was the purpose of all this? To make atonement for Israel." See *Tanḥuma, Emor* 16. *Targum Yonatan* construes the vocalization of עגל (*egel*), *leg*, in Ezekiel 1:7 (a *single calf's leg*) as *agol*, round [or: *oval*]—yielding *a single, oval hoof*, and effectively excising the calf's appearance.

This translation follows CM1, according to which the bull is omitted, whereas the list in MN1, Cin1, J1, and V includes all four creatures.

75. **configured for the throne…** There are two types of unity among the creatures that support the throne: manifesting outwardly, or subsisting only inward. When

traveling, the creatures' appearance is direction-driven—all faces taking on the appearance of the creature appointed over that orientation. Thus, functional alignment is expressed in facial alignment. When stationary, the creatures are bound to each other and influence each other, even while they appear with their own distinctive countenance.

76. **One side says '*Holy*,'...** Each of the four sides of the chariot sings God's praises.

See BT *Ḥullin* 91b, in the name of Rav: "Three divisions of ministering angels utter song daily; one proclaims *Holy*, the other proclaims *Holy*, and the third proclaims *Holy is YHVH of hosts*."

On the significance of the threefold formula from Isaiah, see Vol. 11, p. 275, n. 728.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *One called to another, saying, "Holy, holy, holy is YHVH of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."*

77. **penitents should be modest...** This follows a Talmudic tradition, according to which a sin committed against God (and not known publicly) need not be confessed publicly, only to God Himself. Such a sin *is covered*—or concealed from other people—and can remain so.

See BT *Yoma* 86b: "Rav raised a contradiction. 'It is written: *Happy is one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered* (Psalms 32:1), and it is written: *One who covers his transgressions will not prosper* (Proverbs 28:13)! There is no difficulty. The latter applies to a sin that is known publicly [and should be confessed openly]; the former, to a sin that is not known publicly [and should be confessed only to God].'" See Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *be-ḥet she-eino mefursam*.

See BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rav Kahana: "I consider impudent one who specifies his transgression, as is said: "*Happy is one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered over.*" On confessing transgression, see

Tosafot, ad loc., s.v. *kesu'i ḥata'ah*; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 2:5; Caro, *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 607:2.

According to BT *Pesaḥim* 119a, the image of the hands alludes to "the hand of the blessed Holy One, which is spread out under the wings of the *ḥayyot*, to accept penitents from the hand of the attribute of Justice." See Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 108; *Zohar* 2:75b, 260b (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 63 (quoted in next note).

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *Human hands were under their wings. The four of them had their faces and their wings on their four sides*.

78. **do not raise their hands...** This passage is somewhat obscure. The creatures are apparently unable to raise their hands upward for two reasons. First, separation obtains only in their wings and faces. Second, if their hands could stretch out, they would serve as access points for the *Sitra Aḥra* to the divine chariot.

See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 63: "The hands are recognized locations, well-known windows through which the prayers of penitents enter to be received before the Creator."

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *Their faces and wings were separated above; each had two joining each, and two covering their bodies*.

79. **neither looking nor gazing...** The creatures are nearly overwhelmed by terror, daunted by their awesome task.

According to rabbinic tradition, the River of Fire (see Daniel 7:10) is formed from the sweat of the angelic beings carrying the Throne. The verse in Daniel reads: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:1; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:8; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4; *Zohar* 1:43a

(*Heikh*); 2:211b, 249b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 40a.

80. **four kinds of fire…** In the sefirotic world above, these four colors (white, red, green, and black) signify *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*, respectively. These different influences are expressed in the sweat of the four creatures that support the chariot below. Each fire exudes fire-drops of the aspects of judgment that flow into or out of it—except for black fire, which is associated with *Malkhut* and merely expresses the influence of *Gevurah* above.

On different colors of fire, see BT *Berakhot* 52b: "Beit Hillel said to Beit Shammai, 'There are many lights in the fire.'" See Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *harbeh me'orot*; *Zohar* 1:51a; 2:208a, 216a; 3:33a (*RM*).

81. **second white…** *Sullam* and *Matoq mi-Devash* construe the different flames as diverse manifestations of judgment that occur on different rungs of reality: among the *sefirot*; among the creatures of the chariot; and below. At each level, the quality of judgment is different than that of its mates above and below.

82. **destroying angels…** Angels who carry out the decrees of judgment in hell are created from fire and afflict transgressors with fire. Rabbi El'azar construes the verse to mean that those sinners who fled the purity of Torah, represented as fire, will be consigned to the fires of judgment.

See *Targum Yonatan*; *Zohar* 1:106a (*MhN*); *ZḤ* 4d (*MhN*) and Vol. 10, p. 18, n. 52. Cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:15.

The simple sense of the verse in Ezekiel reads in full: *I will set My face against them; they escaped from fire, but fire shall consume them. You shall know that I am YHVH, when I set my face against them*.

83. **When Spirit arouses to travel…** "Spirit" signifies *Malkhut*, who rides upon the divine chariot; and it is She who determines the direction that the creatures will travel.

84. **three sanctifications…** The three utterances of the word *holy* in Isaiah 6:3—its threefold formula being featured in traditional liturgy—corresponds to the three iterations of *spirit* in reference to the creatures. *Malkhut* contains the flow of all the "spirits," signifying the upper *sefirot*, and of all the living beings and angels below. In particular, She receives the efflux from the *sefirot* of the upper chariot—*Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*—and they infuse the three utterances of sanctification. Ultimately, they derive from the "highest holiness," representing *Ḥokhmah* above.

For a different explanation of this passage, see *Sullam*. On the passage in Ezekiel, see *Zohar* 2:241b–242a; 3:154a. On the upper chariot, see above, note 40.

Ezekiel 1:20 reads in full: *Wherever the spirit would go they went—wherever the spirit would go—and the wheels rose alongside them, for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels*.

85. דמות **(*Demut*), *Image*…** The term *image* signifies a fiery garment with which the creatures clothe themselves. Ezekiel can behold the creatures only through a series of mediating entities; the last in the sequence is called *coals of fire*. This is in keeping with the style of kabbalistic literature, in which figures in the supernal realms are revealed only through their concealment.

On *image, appearance*, and *coals of fire*, see Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 66; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 63.

The simple meaning of the full verse in Ezekiel reads: *The image of the living beings, their appearance, was like burning coals of fire; something with the appearance of torches it was, moving about among the living beings. The fire had a radiance, and from it lightning flashed*.

86. **mirror of living beings…** The term *mirrors* represents a group of angels, the seraphim, who refract the appearance of the living creatures. The creatures gaze at these same mirrors to attain vision of the supernal living

beings, apparently alluding to the *sefirot*. In this passage, garments and specula converge as the media that both reveal and conceal.

"Mirror" renders both the Hebrew word מראה (*mar'ah*) and the Aramaic term חיזו (*ḥeizu*), though the simple meaning in the verse of the plural form מראיהם (*mar'eihem*) is *their appearances*. The Hebrew word מראה (*mar'ah*) can mean either "vision" or "mirror," and the Aramaic word חיזו (*ḥeizu*) means "vision, appearance," but in the *Zohar* also "mirror" (or "speculum, looking-glass, lens"). On the "mirror" as an instrument to view all images or colors, see *Zohar* 1:71b, 88b, 91a, 149b, 183a, 203a; 2:23a. Cf. Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 63.

87. **אופנים (*ofanim*), *wheels*—garments worn for gazing...** The wheels of the chariot (see Ezekiel 1:16) are themselves angelic beings that garb the seraphim and serve as mirrors through which the seraphim can be perceived. Veils and mirrors serve the same purpose of revealing heavenly beings through their concealment.

See Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 63, for a nearly identical passage. See Scholem, *ZḤ*.

Ezekiel 1:16 reads: *The appearance of the wheels and their design were like topaz* [or: *beryl, ruby, carbuncle*], *and all four had the same shape; their appearance and design were as of one wheel being inside the other wheel*.

88. **Lower *ḥashmalim*...** Ezekiel 1:27 refers to the *ḥashmal*: *a gleam as of amber... from the appearance of his loins upward* and to something else *from the appearance of his loins downward*. Rabbi El'azar construes the entities above and below the loins of the figure seated on the throne as upper and lower aspects of the *ḥashmal*, and thus the angelic beings that derive from that lower portion are lower *ḥashmalim*, called *torches*. This lower aspect of *ḥashmal* is modeled after the upper, or inner, one.

On the *ḥashmal*, see Rashi, s.v. *va-ere ke'ein ha-ḥashmal*: "Permission to analyze this verse is denied." On the lower

ḥashmalim, see Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 63.

89. **Mirror within mirror…** The doubling of the word מראה (*mr'h*), which is read here as *mar'ah, mirror*, signifies the multiple strata of mirrors through which the angelic realm is viewed.

The verse in Ezekiel reads in full: *I saw a gleam as of amber—what looked like a fire encased in a frame—from the appearance of his loins upward; and from the appearance of his loins downward, I saw something with the appearance of fire. There was a radiance all about him*.

90. **endowed between two sides…** *Malkhut* is the figure who sits upon the throne carried by the living beings. She receives light from the right and left sides, signifying *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, enabling Her to glow and to convey light upon angelic figures below. The verse from Song of Songs expresses *Malkhut*'s desire to be eternally bound to *Tif'eret*, who mediates the streams of Divinity from *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*.

The following homily esoterically alludes to, and builds upon, imagery in Exodus 28 and Ezekiel 28:11–18, and it depicts *Malkhut* simultaneously as rider of the chariot, high priest, Zion, and Primordial Adam in the Garden of Eden.

On the precious stones, see BT *Bava Batra* 75a; *Zohar* 1:147b, 149b (*ST*); cf. Radak on Ezekiel 28:14, s.v. *be-tokh avnei esh*. On the *seal*, cf. Ezekiel 28:12: *Thus said Adonai YHVH, You were the seal of proportion* [or: *perfection*], *full of wisdom and crown of* [or: *flawless; perfection in*] *beauty*. Cf. Ezekiel 16:14; Psalms 50:2; Lamentations 2:15; Joseph Qara, ad loc., s.v. *attah ḥotem tokhnit*. On this passage, see Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 66–67; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 63. On Ezekiel 28, see Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37*, 580–85.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm. For love is fierce as death, jealousy cruel as Sheol; its sparks are sparks of fire, a flame of Yah*.

91. ***radiance…*** The radiance that infuses *Malkhut* originates in *Ḥesed*, but also receives the fiery influence of judgment from *Gevurah*.

See *Bahir* 36 (54): "A parable: A king had a daughter who was good, beautiful, pleasant, and perfect. He married her to a royal prince—and clothed, crowned, and bejeweled her, giving her abundant goods. Is it possible for the king to ever leave his daughter? You would say not. Is it possible for him to be with her constantly? You would say not. What could he then do? He can place a window between the two; and whenever the father needs the daughter, or the daughter needs the father, they can join together through the window. This is as is written: *All glorious, daughter of the king within, her garment brocaded with gold* (Psalms 45:14)."

92. **penetrating within that gem…** Before her erotic union with the radiance, *Malkhut* is encased in darkness. Afterward, She is consummated, tinted with white and red, deriving from *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, respectively. A sign of Her final perfection is the appearance of sparkling letters within Her, a form of linguistic insemination from above.

On her beautification through penetration by the light, see BT *Sanhedrin* 22b, in the name of Rav: "A woman [before marriage] is a shapeless lump, and concludes a covenant only with him who transforms her into a [useful] vessel, as is written: *For He who espouses you, makes you—His name is YHVH Tseva'ot* (Isaiah 54:5)."

On בדולחא (*bedulḥa*), "pearl" (or "crystal"), see above, note 57. On the similarity of letters and semen as creative potencies, see Abraham Abulafia, *Otsar Eden Ganuz*, 64; *Zohar* 1:15b, 16b, 156b (*ST*); *ZḤ* 74c (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:311; Wolfson, "Dimmui Antropomorphi," 157–58, 169 n. 98; Vol. 11, pp. 529–30, n. 507. On *Shekhinah*'s beauty as a combination of white and red, see *Zohar* 1:15a.

93. **dye originates in the glow of ברק (*baraq*), lightning…** Fully consummated, the jewel is now called

baraq; and when She infuses the angels below with Her light, they are called ברקת (*bareqet*), "smaragd" (or "emerald"). The white and red hues themselves comprise twelve colors; and those twelve higher potencies illuminate these lower twelve —arranged in four columns of three stones, signifying twelve angels. Conferral of a similar name on these angels, on account of *Malkhut*'s infusing them with Her light, indicates union and a continuity of identity between *Malkhut* and Her forces below.

This depiction conflates the description of the first idealized human in Eden (as found in Ezekiel 28:11–14), containing references to various precious stones, and the Zoharic depiction of the ephod and breastpiece worn by the High Priest. The ephod was apparently a multicolored apron worn by Aaron, the High Priest. Its two shoulder straps bore two precious stones, each engraved with the names of six of the twelve tribes. Fastened to the ephod was a breastpiece, to which were affixed twelve other gemstones, each engraved with one of the names of the tribes. Here, the first two signify *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. The twelve colors (depicted as twelve names on the ephod's two stones) symbolize twelve potencies branching out from *Tif'eret*, ultimately illuminating the twelve gemstones that represent *Malkhut*'s twelve angels.

"Smaragd" renders ברקת (*bareqet*); alternatively, "emerald." The Hebrew term derives from the Latin *smaragdus*, and from the Ancient Greek *smáragdos*, or *máragdos*, as well as from the Semitic root *brq*, "to shoot lightning; to flash in darkness." In Akkadian, the cognate is *barruktu*. See *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi* on Exodus 28:17, 39:10; *Targum* on Song of Songs 5:14; Jastrow, s.v. *bareqet*; Alter on Exodus 28:17–20.

"Actually" renders ממש (*mamash*), a technical term that signals the immanence of the supernal world in the mundane world. From a hermeneutical perspective, exoteric and esoteric significations overlap. Here, it refers

to the equation of angels and *Malkhut* (as explained above). See Wolfson, “Beautiful Maiden,” 80–88.

The “twelve colors” derive from the twelve “diagonal borders” (edges of a cube) mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1. See above, p. 381, n. 27. On the stones of the High Priest’s ephod and breastpiece, see Exodus 28:9–21; 39:6–14; *Zohar* 2:229b–230a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:917–20.

94. ***to and fro…*** The rapid movements of the creatures signify their indeterminacy and their paradoxical qualities.

Moses de León compares their appearance to that of sunlight flitting about on the surface of water in a bowl, or of the experience one attains through the technique of rolling one’s closed eyeball. See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67.

On the meaning of *to and fro*, see BT *Ḥagigah* 13b (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *ratso va-shov, ha-kivshan, mi-bein ha-ḥarasim*; *Tosafot*, ad loe., s.v. *ratso va-shov*): “*The divine creatures darting to and fro like the appearance of a flash of lightning* (Ezekiel 1:14). What is the meaning of *to and fro*? Rav Yehudah said, ‘Like fire that is emitted from a furnace, [whose flame is continuously bursting out and withdrawing].’ What is the meaning of *like the appearance of a flash of lightning*? Rabbi Yose son of Ḥanina said, ‘Like the fire that is emitted from between pieces of earthenware used for refining gold.’”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 50:1; Rashi and Radak on Ezekiel 1:14; Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 116; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 64–65; Greenberg; below, notes 107, 160.

95. **Light that rises in this name…** The blessed Holy One manifests the essential divine light first through the ineffable tetragrammaton, *YHVH*, and then through all other divine names.

See Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 2a, 40b, 44a ff.

96. **flows from a hidden spring…** The creatures bearing the chariots also ultimately derive from the divine light, each expressing Divinity in its own distinctive way. Vision of the *sefirot* that comprise the upper living beings (*Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*) is elusive, but authentic prophecy reveals them indirectly, through gazing upon the lower creatures. The fleeting vision is approximated through the mystical technique of refracting sunlight through a water-bearing vessel, and gazing upon the reflection of images on a wall—an apprehension called *darting to and fro*. The mediated view is called seeing "as if from behind a wall."

On gazing at sunlight in water, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 9:12. On the reflection of light upon a wall, see Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 89–90 (113) (and Mopsik's notes): "If you place a bowl of water facing the sun and shake it, you will find the radiance of shining mirrors on the wall—*darting to and fro*—and no one can get a bead on them on account of their speed moving this way and that. This is an image of *darting to and fro*." See *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*); Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 47.

On the living beings deriving from the upper sefirotic world, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 22–24 (and Wolfson's note on p. 23 line 1), 191–92. On seeing from behind a wall, see above, note 28. On the elusiveness of mystical vision, see Mopsik, *Le Sicle du Sanctuaire*, 259–60, n. 911; above, note 36.

97. **This concludes the image…** The descriptions thus far elucidated the nature of the living beings from the perspective of the upper, sefirotic world. The descriptions that follow entail the nature of the creatures as seen from the lower world.

98. **As *I gazed*…** The full verse reads: *As I gazed on the creatures—behold—I saw one wheel on the ground next to each of the four-faced creatures*.

99. ***gazed on the creatures…*** Mystical contemplation of the lower creatures enables one to perceive the sefirotic creatures of the upper chariot.

See Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 116; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 66.

100. **Metatron…** Metatron is the chief angel, variously described as the Prince of the World, Prince of the Countenance (or Presence), celestial scribe, Youth, Servant, and even יהוה קטן (*YHVH Qatan*), "Lesser *YHVH*" (3 Enoch 12:5, based on Exodus 23:21). In Heikhalot literature, Metatron is also identified with Enoch, a biblical personage who ascended to heaven (based on Genesis 5:24). Here, in accord with standing 500 years' journey above the lower angels, he has five names. There is one wheel on the ground for each of the four directions, and so Metatron's names are expressed in those four.

On this wheel, see BT *Ḥagigah* 13b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "[It refers to] a certain angel, who stands on the earth with his head reaching the living creatures. It is taught in a *baraita*: His name is Sandalfon: he is higher than his fellows by a [distance of] five hundred years' journey, and he stands behind the chariot tying crowns for his Maker." See *Targum Yonatan*; Rashi; Qara; Radak; *Zohar* 1:21a; *ZḤ* 63b (*ShS*); Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 117–18; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 66. Cf. *Zohar* 2:48b.

On Metatron's stature, see 3 Enoch 9:1–2, in the name of Rabbi Yishma'el: "Metatron, Prince of the Presence, said to me: '… I was enlarged and increased in size till I matched the world in length and breadth.'" See *Ma'yan Hokhmah* (in *Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:59). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 15:6.

The name of the angel מטטרון (*Metatron*) is sometimes spelled with a י (*yod*): מיטטרון (*Mitatron*). This alternate spelling apparently alludes to Metatron as an embodiment or

manifestation of *Shekhinah*, while the shorter spelling alludes to the transformation of Enoch (who is "linked below") into Metatron. See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§389, 959–60; *Zohar* 2:277a (*Tosafot*) (Vol. 5, p. 348); *ZḤ* 42d; *TZ*, intro, 15a; 21, 44a, 61a; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 88–89; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 380; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 261.

On the name "Servant," see *Zohar* 1:126a–b, 128a (last two *MhN*), 181b; 2:131b. On Metatron and the four directions, see Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67.

The name זבוליאל (*Zevuli'el*) derives from זבול (*zevul*), "Loft," one of the seven heavens. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Zohar* 2:201b–202a. On Metatron's many names, see *TZ* 57, 91b.

On Metatron in general, see Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 73–108; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 377–81; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:626–31; Lieberman, "Metatron, the Meaning of His Name"; Abrams, "Boundaries of Divine Ontology"; Wolfson, "Metatron and Shi'ur Qomah"; Idel, *Ben*, index, s.v. "Metatron"; Vol. 10, pp. 383–84, n. 68; Vol. 11, pp. 453–54, nn. 269–70. On the depiction of Metatron here, see Scholem, *ZḤ*.

On this passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:643–45.

101. **4,500 rivers of balsam…** Thirteen rivers of pure balsam await the righteous in the world that is coming. In the *Zohar*, the rivers of balsam often represent the fragrant flow of emanation from *Binah* to *Shekhinah*. Here, they emerge from thirteen hidden rivers of divine light, apparently signifying the thirteen attributes of Compassion that abide in *Keter*. The enormous numbers emphasize Metatron's power and fearsomeness.

The multiples of forty-five allude to the Divine Name of Forty-Five Letters, derived from the numerical values of the spelled-out letters in the tetragrammaton, according to the technique of *millui alef* in which each of the last three letters is filled out with the letter א (*alef*), as follows: יוד (*yod*), 20; הא

(*he*), 6; ואו (*vav alef vav*), 13; הא (*he alef*), 6. The sum is forty-five, also equal to the value in *gimatriyyah* of the name אדם (*Adam*). In *Midrash ha-Ne'lam*, Metatron is called "first of God's creations." Here, he is associated not only with the first human, but also with the figure who sits on the chariot in Ezekiel 1:26.

On Metatron as the first of God's creations, see *Zohar* 1:126b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Or Zaru'a*, 259–60. Cf. *Zohar* 1:127b (*MhN*); *ZḤ* 4a, 7d, 8d, 16a (all *MhN*).

On the rivers of balsam, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 62:2; JT *Avodah Zarah* 3:1, 42c; BT *Ta'anit* 25a; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 12, p. 238; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Zohar* 1:4b, 7a, 88a (*ST*), 176a; 2:127a–b, 146b, 177a (*SdTs*); 3:181a; *ZḤ* 49d (printed editions; Vol. 8, p. 221), 70d (*ShS*), 76c (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:27b; 3:91a, 131a, 139a, 144b (last three *IR*), 289a–b (*IZ*).

On wreaths tied for God, see above, note 64. On the thirteen attributes of Compassion, see below, note 139.

102. **letters of the Ineffable Name…** Metatron's "name is like the name of his Master." When the angels see the divine name emerging from Metatron, they are terrified and enthralled.

See BT *Sanhedrin* 38b; below, note 105. On the legions accompanying Metatron, see Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 66.

103. **blending in one another…** In Ezekiel's vision, four identical double אופנים (*ofanim*), *wheels*, are located below and alongside each living being and move in perfect unison with them. See Ezekiel 1:15–16: *I saw the living beings, and behold, one wheel on the ground next to each of the four-faced living beings. The appearance of the wheels and their design were like topaz and all four had the same shape; their appearance and design were as of a wheel inside a wheel*. While the heads of the four creatures are fused, their faces remain distinct. Alternatively, the

image of *a wheel inside a wheel* could suggest concentric circles within the wheel.

On the interlacing of the wheels, cf. *Zohar* 1:43a, 44a; 2:246a, 249b (last four all *Heikh*); Greenberg. On the four faces and the four directions, see Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 68.

104. **by means of the light…** The light of the Ineffable Name determines the direction toward which the creatures and legions of angels proceed—all united in each expedition.

105. **abides enduringly in the holy name…** Various sources identify the angel of Exodus 23:20–21—*Here, I am sending an angel before you to guard you on the way…. for My name is within him*—as Metatron.

See Rashi on Exodus 23:21: "Metatron has the numerical value of *Shaddai* [314]."

See Naḥmanides on Exodus 23:20; 24:1; *Zohar* 1:127b (*MhN*), 149a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 12b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Or Zaru'a*, 259–60; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 66. Cf. Ibn Ezra (short) on Exodus 23:21.

106. **Twelve celestial keys…** These may refer to twelve combinations of the tetragrammaton's letters as they are distributed among twelve legions of angels. The four distinct "keys" refer to the four letters of the tetragrammaton and to the *sefirot* associated with them—*Ḥokhmah, Binah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*—which are united above but differentiated in the world below.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:644. Cf. Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 67, which offers a Hebrew version of this description of Metatron's keys, with slight modifications. On Metatron as the master of keys, see *Zohar* 1:75a (*ST*), 181b; 3:171b. Cf. Vol. 11, p. 667, n. 105.

107. **first key…** Signifying *Ḥokhmah*, which is utterly imperceptible.

108. **second key…** *Binah*'s light is expressed in three hues: as *Ḥesed*, signified by "white"; *Tif'eret*, signified by

“green”; or *Gevurah*, whose color (red) is left unmentioned.

109. **third key…** The light from *Tif’eret* illuminates all the lower *sefirot*. It receives its own illumination from the “thirty-two wondrous paths of Wisdom” mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1. This light alludes to the gleaming firmament in Ezekiel 1:22–26.

110. **fourth key…** *Malkhut* mediates the divine light from above—specifically, from *Ḥokhmah* (signified by “wisdom”) and from *Binah* (represented by “understanding”)—so that it can be apprehended and tolerated.

For a different explanation of the four keys, see *Sullam*.

111. ***When they moved…*** The simple meaning of the full verse reads: *When they moved, each could move in the direction of any of its four quarters; they did not veer when they moved*.

112. **four below them…** The description of four creatures having four quarters evokes an image of a continuum of quaternities—a series of angelic cohorts arranged hierarchically and moving in concert. The noun in רבעיהן (*riv’eihen*), *its… sprawlers*, is *reva*, literally “fourth, quarter,” which is read here as the Aramaic form of the Hebrew verbal root רבץ (*rvts*), “lie; sprawl; stretched out,” as in Exodus 23:5, which depicts a beast laboring under its burden.

See Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 69: “Thus all rungs and all existents are arranged in quaternities, according to their species—four upon four, and four upon four, extending to include the four elements. Then all species endure, all deriving from the four letters of the name *YHVH*, may He be blessed. Therefore, the verse says, *When they moved, each could move in the direction of any of its four quarters*.” See ibid., 67–69; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 69. “Sprawling under its burden” follows Onkelos’ translation of the verse in Exodus, and Gikatilla includes this same interpretation.

The context of Ezekiel 1:19 reads in full (19–21): *When the living beings moved*, האופנים (*ha-ofanim*), *the wheels, moved beside them; and when the living beings rose off the ground, the wheels rose, too. Wherever the spirit would go, they went—wherever the spirit would go—and the wheels rose alongside them, for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels. When these moved, those moved; and when these halted, those halted; and when these rose off the ground, the wheels rose alongside them—for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels*.

113. **the *ḥayyot* carry those that carry them…** According to the sequence of the verse—*when the ḥayyot moved, the ofanim moved*—the *ḥayyot* who ride upon the *ofanim* move the latter, whereas logic dictates that the lower angels constitute a chariot for the upper ones and thus should be described as moving first. Here it is the uppermost entity, the throne, that moves the creatures below.

See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 69–70; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 69. According to rabbinic tradition, one of the miracles of the ark of the covenant is that it carried those who were appointed to carry it. See BT *Sotah* 35a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 4:20; Rashi on Joshua 4:11; Rashi, Radak on 1 Chronicles 15:26.

114. **what causes their perspiration?…** They are not exerting themselves at all! The living beings exude sweat as a result of their awe when they contemplate the Throne of Glory above them. Their attachment to the throne above girds them for carrying the *ofanim* below.

See above, note 79; below, note 120.

115. ***As for their rims…*** *Rims* renders גביהם (*gabbeihem*), but the wheel's "rim" here can also be construed as a "brow," because of the association with *eyes*.

See Greenberg. The full verse reads: *As for their rims* [or: *brows*], *they had height and they had terror, for the rims* [or: *brows*] *of all four were covered all over with eyes*.

116. **colors of the body…** The “body” here signifies the aggregate of the four creatures, each one of whom corresponds to a particular color. The entirety shines in such a way that it will be viewed with the precise proportions above and below. Here the “colors” lack specificity and so may allude to *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif’eret*, and *Malkhut*; or alternatively, to *Ḥokhmah, Binah, Tif’eret*, and *Malkhut*.

“Embroidered expanse” renders רקימו דרקיע (*reqimo de-raqi’a*), “weaving of the sky (or firmament).”

117. ***height* on the upper side…** The rims of the wheels evoke awe and terror—the twin religious emotions associated with holiness. *Height of the heavens* apparently alludes to the angelic characteristic deriving from *Tif’eret*, and *terror* to the angelic characteristic deriving from *Malkhut*.

118. ***height*—with the ascent…** The wheels attain their full stature when the vision of the rims’ colors ascend to the heights. Among the *sefirot, Tif’eret* blends the hues of *Ḥesed* on the right, and *Gevurah* on the left; and here He may be performing this task below to acquire the name *height of the heavens*. *Terror* is raised by the living creatures, who transform the harder judgment in *Malkhut* into the sweeter aspect of judgment above, in *Binah*.

On the two different aspects of the rims, see Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah* (69): “In front they have height; and from behind, within them, they have terror. These are *the eyes of YHVH*, משטטות (*meshotetot*), *ranging, over the whole earth* (2 Chronicles 16:9). For there are eyes that are משטטים (*meshotetim*), and eyes that are משטטות (*meshotetot*).” In describing God’s providential eyes, the prophet Zechariah employs a masculine verb, whereas Chronicles employs a feminine verb—and Zoharic Kabbalah often interprets these as two separate forces. See Scholem, *ZḤ*. Cf. Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 71.

119. **gazing in all directions…** The expression “masters of eyes” refers to angelic beings, surveying human

behavior below. In contrast, the visual range of the living beings is all-encompassing.

On the “masters of eyes,” see *Zohar* 1:147a, 232a, 234a (all *Tos*); 2:4a–b, 50a (last two *Mat*), 50b, 68b (*Tos*), 74a, 202a (*Mat*), 245b, 251b (last two *Heikh*); 3:90b; *ZḤ* 32b, 62b (*ShS*), 105b (*Mat*); V5, 330b (*Mat*); Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines*, 384, n. 210. Cf. Vol. 11, p. 546, n. 26.

120. **unable to gaze above…** Unable to actually see God’s glory, these angelic beings proclaim God’s glory wherever it may be.

According to BT *Ḥullin* 91b–92a, the *ofanim* chant *Blessed be the glory…*, whereas according to the morning liturgy, both the *ofanim* and the *ḥayyot* chant this line. See *Tosafot, Ḥullin* 92a, s.v. *barukh ofanim*.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 4: “The *ḥayyot* stand next to the throne of His glory, but do not know the place of His glory. The *ḥayyot* stand in awe and dread, in fear and trembling; and from the perspiration of their faces, a river of fire streams and goes forth before Him, as is said: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence* (Daniel 7:10).”

The obscure formulation in the verse from Ezekiel (which modern scholars generally attribute to scribal error—a confusion between two similar-looking letters) leads the *Zohar* to interpret *His place* as a reference to a specific place. See *Bahir* 90 (130–33); *Zohar* 2:63b (standard editions), 207a; *ZḤ* 76b (*MhN, Rut*).

121. **without an explicit description…** Rabbi El’azar wonders why the term וגביהן (*ve-gabbeihen*), *and their rims*, at the beginning of the verse is not elaborated upon, whereas the similar term גבותם (*gabbotam*), *their rims*, receives a fuller description. He explains that from this side of the living beings, probably their hind parts, their gaze is internal, looking upon the height, whereas the fuller description of the *rims* refers to the eyes gazing outward.

Grammatically speaking, the terms *ve-gabbeihen* and *gabbotam* differ mainly in the gender ascribed to their referent: the first is masculine whereas the second is feminine.

The verse in 1 Kings describes the great washing pool in the Temple courtyard, standing upon statues of twelve oxen. Perhaps to emphasize that it was not only the ox beneath the chariot that looked inward, the *Zohar* states that "they all gaze within."

The verse in Kings reads in full: [*The castmetel sea* or *tank*] *stood on twelve oxen, three facing north and three facing west and three facing south and three facing east. And the sea* [or: *tank*] *was on top of them, and all their hind parts were inward*. The imagery of this chapter in 1 Kings, with its references to wheels and pillars, is echoed in some of the *Zohar*'s discussion of the chariot here.

122. **circumcised himself...** Upon circumcision one attains the rung of *Yesod*, which represents the divine phallus, the extension of *Tif'eret*. After his circumcision, Abraham rises to become the earthly manifestation of *Ḥesed*, while both Jacob and Moses symbolize *Tif'eret*, the divine male. In the *Zohar*, the phrase מארי דביתא (*marei de-veita*), "master of the house," designates both Jacob and Moses (as well as *Tif'eret*), each of whom is husband of *Shekhinah*.

Genesis 25:27 reads in full: *The boys grew up. Esau became a skilled hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was* איש תם (*ish tam*), *a simple man, dwelling in tents*. The word *tam* means "simple, innocent, plain, mild, quiet, sound, wholesome, complete, perfect." *Targum Onqelos* renders *ish tam* as גבר שלים (*gevar shelim*), "a complete (or perfect, consummate) man." Meanwhile, *ish* is (in the appropriate contexts) a standard biblical designation for "husband," and as such is applied to Jacob in Genesis 29:32, 34; 30:15, 18, 20.

Moses is called איש האלהים (*ish ha-elohim*), *man of God* (Deuteronomy 33:1; Psalms 90:1), which is understood

midrashically as “husband of God” (and thus able to command Him) and kabbalistically as “husband of *Shekhinah*” (and thus united with Her).

On the title “master of the house,” see *Zohar* 1:21b, 138b, 152b, 236b, 238b, 239a; 2:22b, 131b, 133b, 134b, 235b, 238b, 244b (*Heikh*); 3:163b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 101–2 (129). The title is also applied to the mystic who masters the secrets of Torah (*Zohar* 2:99b).

On Moses as husband of *Shekhinah*, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim, Vezot Haberakhah*, 443–44, 448 (variants); *Tanḥuma, Vezot Haberakhah* 2 (*Ets Yosef*, ad loc.); *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman) on 33:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:5; *Zohar* 1:6b, 21b–22a, 148a, 152a–b, 192b, 236b, 239a; 2:22b, 131b, 134b, 194b, 235b, 244b (*Heikh*); 3:261b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 25; Vol. 4, p. 74, n. 17. For the association of “house” with “wife,” see M *Yoma* 1:1.

123. ***and their rims*—abiding within…** The two iterations of *their rims* are analogized to the two ways in which the biblical patriarchs bond with *Malkhut*. When the rims are called *gabbeihem, they have height* like Abraham, looking inward (toward the masculine); and when they are called *gabbotam*, they are *covered all over with eyes*, looking outward (toward the feminine), like Jacob and Moses.

See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 69; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 70–71.

124. ***When the ḥayyot moved…*** The verse is presented in an edited form (excising *beside them* and *off the ground*) to emphasize the harmonious movement of the different parts, rather than their relative positions. Already in the biblical text, the emphasis is on the simultaneity of the movement of *ḥayyot* and *ofanim*, despite the absence of any physical connection between them. The identity of the *spirit* is unclear, referring to either the ensemble of the four living creatures or to the single dominant living creature in any particular movement.

On discrepancies between MT and Zoharic citations of Scripture, see above, pp. 365–66, n. 136. For the full context of Ezekiel 1:19, see above, note 112. On the meaning of *spirit*, see Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 48.

125. **על אשר (*Al asher*), *Whereupon…*** In terms of their simple meaning, על אשר (*Al asher*) and אל אשר (*el asher*) may both be translated as *wherever*, but the prepositions involved have different meanings when translated literally—על (*al*), *upon* and אל (*el*), *toward*. "Concealed spirit" apparently refers to *Binah*, from whom another "spirit"—signifying *Tif'eret*—emerges. This latter spirit conveys divine overflow onto the "spirit" associated with *Malkhut*, who in turn rests upon the living creatures. *Al asher* designates the smooth interlacing of these rungs, while *el asher* indicates a less intimate and more indirect conferral of overflow from above.

Cf. Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 71–72; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

126. **all gaze upon it…** The living beings gaze upon the spirit signifying *Tif'eret*, that had emerged from primordial spirit that symbolizes *Binah*. They do so in order to augment the divine glow that inheres within them and derives from that supernal place. In this lower manifestation, the luminous glow is called קרני (*qarnei*), "horns" (or "rays"), of the living beings.

On the "horns of the living beings," see BT *Ḥagigah* 13a; *Zohar* 2:56b.

127. **This spirit…** *Binah*, signified by "primordial spirit," rides upon the upper chariot, consisting of the *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*. Here, She contains the divine name *Ehyeh*—symbolizing *Keter*—within Her. As the living creatures in the lower chariot cowered before *Malkhut*, who rides upon them, so too do the *sefirot* of the supernal chariot tremble before the name *Ehyeh*. Latent within *Ehyeh* are two other divine names: *YHVH* and *Adonai*, signifying *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*, respectively.

See *Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. *Sullam*.

128. **seventy ineffable names...** In the *Zohar* these names are usually said to abide within *Malkhut*, who is the lowest member of the upper chariot. Also present within the chariot are the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet—which, together with ten *sefirot*, comprise the "thirty-two wondrous paths of wisdom" mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1.

129. **origin of the Mystery of Faith...** The "spirit" associated with the name *YHVH*, in its manifestation as *Tif'eret*, is the central hub of the *sefirot*—thus symbolizing the mystery of divine unity. While all of Divinity can be said to be expressed by the supreme name *Ehyeh*, the name *YHVH* functions in a parallel fashion below. Moreover, the two names have three shared letters, indicating that יהוה (*YHVH*) actually derives from אהיה (*'HYH*), *Ehyeh*.

130. **lower spirit...** The third "spirit" among those of the upper chariot is associated with *Malkhut*, who is signified here by the name *YHVH Adonai*. Usually *Malkhut* is represented by the name *Adonai* alone, but here the two are invoked together. This pairing indicates the intimacy of connection between the male and female divine lovers. In both reading the Torah and in prayer, the name *YHVH* is read aloud as *Adonai* to signify their conjunction.

Only CM1 reads "the name *YHVH Adonai* within," while the other manuscripts and printed editions read simply "the name *Adonai* within."

131. **Upper *ofanim*...** All the components of the lower chariot have their complements in the upper chariot. The *ofanim* (or "wheels") above allude to *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, which are represented as the legs of the divine body, and apparently also to *Yesod* and *Malkhut*.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *His thighs—pillars of marble set upon pedestals of gold*.

132. **When one of them bonds...** Ezekiel saw אופן אחד (*ofan eḥad*), *one wheel, on the ground next to each of the*

four-faced creatures (Ezekiel 1:15). In both upper and lower chariots, as soon as one *ofan* (or "wheel") joins with the living beings above, that *ofan* divides into its four constituent parts, resulting in a pattern of quaternities both above and below.

The term מרכבה (*merkavah*), "chariot," derives from the root רכב (*rkhv*), "ride, rule, consolidate, join, graft, fuse, composite." The word exemplifies the unified fourfold arrangement of divine and heavenly realities, which is the very essence of Ezekiel's vision. While he could not look upon the upper chariot directly, he could fathom it by viewing its refracted image in the lower chariot.

The term *merkavah* does not appear in Ezekiel 1. The oldest extant connection between his vision and a chariot is in Ben Sira 49:8: "It was Ezekiel who saw the vision of glory, which God showed him above the chariot of the cherubim and described the different creatures of the chariot throne."

133. ***Wherever the spirit…*** The verse in Ezekiel expresses the multi-layered continuity of the three spirits, one atop the other, attaining expression as three divine names—*Ehyeh, YHVH*, and *Adonai*—that correspond to distinct rungs within Divinity.

The full verse reads: *Wherever the spirit would go, they went—wherever the spirit would go—and the wheels rose alongside them, for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels*.

134. **When they shimmer…** The simple meaning of the verse continues the theme of perfect integration of living beings and wheels, but here Rabbi El'azar explains that it is the three spirits and three names that are the causes of the illumination and movement of the living creatures in both upper and lower chariots. Standing still (after having *halted*) indicates the intimate union of these three animating spirits and names, hushed in their union.

This verse reads in full: *When these moved, those moved; and when these halted, those halted; and when these rose off the ground, the wheels rose alongside them—for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels*.

135. ***these rose off the ground…*** The term *ground* signifies the spirit associated with *Shekhinah*, who is often called "ground, earth." When the *sefirot* of the upper chariot take on the form of the spirits as they rise, the *ofanim* (or "wheels") ascend with them, thus attesting to the complete integration of spirits, living beings, and wheels.

136. **desire of that spirit…** This spirit, associated with *Malkhut* and the divine name *Adonai*, is part of the ensemble of the supernal living creatures (the others being *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*). At the same time, it is closer to the *ofanim* that are associated with the lower *sefirot*.

137. **Three…** Of the three *ofanim* in the upper chariot, *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are revealed, whereas *Yesod* is concealed during erotic union with the living being, signifying *Shekhinah*. Rabbi El'azar engages in wordplay, construing the word תרשיש (*tarshish*), *topaz*, as an anagram meaning *trei shesh*, "two of six," alluding to the two *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Hod* among the six lower *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*.

The Septuagint translates *tarshish* as *chrysolite* (here and in Exodus 28:20), referring to a bright yellow stone, probably topaz, but in Ezekiel 10:9 and 28:13 as *anthrax*, a dark red precious stone, signifying a ruby or carbuncle. Onkelos (on Exodus 28:20) renders it as *kerum yama*, literally "color of the sea," denoting beryl. Rashi and Joseph Qara call it *qristal* in Old French; Radak suggests it is like *tekhelet*, "bluish-green." See Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37*, 580–83.

In rabbinic tradition, *tarshish* signifies an immense sea or, through wordplay, the dimensions of an angel or of the world. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:12; BT *Pesaḥim* 94a, *Ḥullin* 91b; *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 1. Cf. Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 119. On the anagram *trei shesh*, cf. *TZ* intro, 16a; 13, 27b; 69, 106a; Scholem, *ZḤ*.

138. ***A likeness above the heads…*** See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, in the name of Rav Yehudah: "There are two רקיעים (*reqi'im*), "firmaments" (or "expanses, heavens"), as is said: *Behold, to YHVH your God belongs the heavens and the heavens beyond the heavens* (Deuteronomy 10:14)." In the *Zohar*, the "expanse" below (namely *Yesod*), stands over the four living beings within the realm of *Shekhinah*, while the "expanse" above (namely *Binah*) presides over the upper living beings (namely *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*). The lower expanse is called *a likeness* since it is modeled after the one above.

On the prohibition against contemplating (or gazing) beyond the expanse, see BT *Ḥagigah* 13a: "Until here [the firmament *above the heads of the living being*], you have permission to speak; from this point forward you do not have permission to speak, as is written in the book of Ben Sira: 'Seek not things concealed from you, nor search those hidden from you. Reflect on that which is permitted to you; you have no business with secret matters.'"

On the two expanses, see *Zohar* 1:20a, 21a, 85b–86a, 162b, 211a; 2:56b, 211a, 212a–213a; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 70. Cf. *ZḤ* 14a (*MhN*).

The verse reads in full: *An image above the heads of the living being: an expanse like awesome ice, spread out above their heads*.

139. ***Heads of the living being…*** The four heads are gleaming rays of light that shine in all directions. Like the twelve tribes—who are divided into three groups with one standard bearer for each—these four creatures bearing the chariot also represent twelve figures, topped by *Binah* above them. The thirteen correspond to the thirteen attributes of Compassion that abide in *Keter*, but may also signify the thirteen rivers of balsam that provide delight for the righteous in the World that is Coming, which symbolizes *Binah*.

God's "thirteen attributes of Compassion" are derived from Exodus 34:6–7: *YHVH, YHVH! A compassionate and gracious God, long-suffering, and abounding in kindness and faithfulness, keeping kindness for the thousandth generation, bearing crime, trespass, and sin*…. See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17b. In Kabbalah, these attributes of compassion are often associated with *Keter*, the realm of total compassion.

Thirteen rivers of balsam await the righteous in the world that is coming. In the *Zohar*, the rivers of balsam often represent the fragrant flow of emanation from *Binah* to *Shekhinah*. See above, note 101.

The manuscripts and printed editions all read רישי נהורין (*reishei nehorin*), "heads of light," alluding to (or a scribal corruption of) רישי נהרין (*reishei naharin*), "riverheads," deriving from Genesis 2:10, which reads: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:211b.

140. ***Expanse…*** In the biblical text, *expanse* renders רקיע (*raqi'a*), signifying the platform upon which the divine throne stood. The term refers to both the lower and upper expanse, differentiated by the extent to which the forms that it contains can be apprehended. The supernal expanse signifies *Binah*—who represents *Ḥokhmah* and *Keter*, as well—while *Keter* oversees the entire sefirotic structure, encompassing them with the name *Ehyeh*.

141. **four shimmers of the heavenly world…** The four letters of the divine name אהיה (*EHYH*), associated with *Keter*, are represented by the three names *Ehyeh, YHVH*, and *Adonai*, signifying *Keter, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*, respectively. *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* are represented as the two letters of the name יה (*Yah*)—the fourth name—and as "sapphire" and "concealed expanse," respectively. The name *Yah* is "united and not united" with *Keter*—"principle of all"—to indicate the latter's paradoxical transcendence and connection to the *sefirot* below. In scribal technique the letter *yod* is embellished with

a “crown,” and in Zoharic Kabbalah, *Keter* is also symbolized by the crown atop the *yod* of the name *Yah*.

On the sapphire, see Ezekiel 1:26: *Above the expanse over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, semblance of a throne*. Here, the *Zohar* interprets *the expanse over their heads* to signify *Ḥokhmah* as spread out above *Binah*. See also Ezekiel 10:1. Cf. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 50; *Sullam*.

See Radak on Isaiah 54:11: “The Gaon Rav Saadia explained that [sapphire] is a white stone, and the wise Rabbi Abraham wrote that it is red.” See Onkelos, Ibn Ezra on Exodus 24:10 (short); *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*); 2:245b (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 72; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 77.

142. **ן (*final nun*) replaces א (*alef*)...** The letter א (*alef*), which is the first letter of the divine name אהיה (*Ehyeh*), signifying *Keter*, comprises all the *sefirot*. However, among the lower *sefirot*, that unity is symbolized instead by final *nun*, which comprises male and female aspects of Divinity. Here, those two are divided into the Upper, Male World (*Binah* and above) and the Lower, Female World (*Ḥesed* through *Malkhut*).

In the *Zohar*, the letter ו (*vav*) usually signifies the middle six *sefirot*. Here, its grammatical function also as a conjunction enables it to symbolically include *Malkhut*, who is designated by the formula “His court.”

While it would make more sense for the substituting letter to be ו (*vav*), thus completing the name יהוה (*YHVH*), all the manuscripts and early printed editions read ן (final *nun*), possibly the result of an early scribal error.

On the letter ן (final *nun*) as symbolizing the union of male and female, see above, note 51. On “He and His Court,” see JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Sanhedrin* 1:1, 18a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Tanḥuma, Va’era* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va’era* 21; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:4; Naḥmanides on Genesis 19:24; Exodus 13:21; *Zohar* 1:15b, 64b, 105a, 107b, 159b,

192b, 198a, 240a; 2:37b, 46a, 56a, 86a, 149a, 227b; 3:9b, 149a; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 98; Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 19:24.

143. **living creatures are unable to know...** Even the living creatures of the upper chariot, namely *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*, cannot see the expanse (*Binah*) above them, despite the integrated unity of all the *sefirot*.

Cf. Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 73. See Qara on Ezekiel 1:23: "The wings cover their faces, impeding their gazing above."

144. **Three names...** Upper Expanse (namely *Binah*) bestows divine blessing, signified by "nourishment," upon the living creatures above. The divine names that are associated with the *sefirot* have corresponding appellations such as Holy, Merciful, and Gracious in the lower realm, through which the divine name can be perceived. These three are all epithets for the name *El*, associated with *Ḥesed*. Kabbalah treats these descriptors of the blessed Holy One as a subordinate rung of names that allow the prophet or mystical reader of the biblical text to identify the different aspects of Divinity.

On these three names, see Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 53a.

145. **All those epithets...** The name *YHVH* represents the core of the Divine Being, and all honorifics and descriptors derive from that name. These epithets serve as garments to conceal the inner mysteries of the divine names, but the blessed Holy One removes them when He prepares for intimate union with *Shekhinah*. They also serve as wings that enable divine flight.

On "wings," see next note.

146. **In the time to come...** The *Zohar* looks with anticipation toward an idealized messianic era in which God will be known directly by His names rather than through the textual thickets of the Torah's present condition, aligned with the spiritual opacity of our pre-redemptive time.

Cf. Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 51a–b: "Know that in the time to come when *YHVH*, may He be blessed, comes to redeem Israel and to embrace the Assembly of Israel in His arms, he will strip away all garments and epithets.... When He embraces Assembly of Israel and they are united as one, then He will put all the garments and epithets upon them both again.... and they will be as one entity, inseparable." See idem, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 73–74.

Will no more be cloaked renders לא יכנף עוד (*lo yikkanef od*), from the root כנף (*knf*), "wing," but also "cover" or "conceal," as is indicated by the wings' function in Ezekiel 1:11, 23. See also Exodus 25:20; 37:9; 1 Kings 8:7; Ezekiel 16:8; Ruth 3:9; 2 Chronicles 5:8.

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *Under the expanse, each had one pair of wings extended toward those of the others; and each had another pair, covering its body*. According to the simple meaning of the verse, one pair of wings is higher than the other (see ibid., 11).

The context in Isaiah (30:19–22) reads: *Indeed, O people in Zion, dwellers of Jerusalem, you shall not have cause to weep. He will grant you His favor at the sound of your cry; He will respond as soon as He hears it.... Then your Guide will no more be ignored* [or: *thrust into a corner*], *but your eyes will watch your Guide.... And you will treat as unclean the silver overlay of your images and the golden plating of your idols. You will cast them away like a menstruous woman. "Out!" you will call to them*.

147. **two, veiling each...** Each of the living creatures has two pairs of wings, one on the right side and one on the left, signifying the blending of graciousness and judgment in each one.

148. **mystery of their bodies...** Though wings, bodies, epithets, and divine names appear in distinct pairs, in truth they are all integrated as one. This underlying unity is demonstrated by the explicit comparison in the verse: *the sound of their wings* was *like the sound* of God's essence.

The distinction lies in whether Divinity is manifest in upper or lower dimensions of existence, with measurable parameters being one characteristic of the lower reality. “Their bodies” signifies divine names like *El, Elohim*, and *YHVH* (associated with *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*, respectively), while the “wings” signify appellations such as Great, Mighty, and Awesome. In his mystical vision, Ezekiel views the lower, differentiated form of the wings.

A parasang is a Persian mile, equaling just under 3.5 modern miles. In the Talmud, distances were measured by the time it would take to traverse them, and it was approximated that 3 parasangs would take 3.5 hours to walk. The quantity 500 is presumably related to the idea that *Binah* has 50 gates of Understanding, and that there are 5 primary *sefirot* below (*Ḥesed* through *Hod*) that manifest differentiation. The number usually denotes the measure of the Tree of Life or the measure of the distance from heaven to earth.

See JT Berakhot 1:1, 2c; 9:1, 13a; *Targum Yerushalmi* on Genesis 2:9; BT *Ḥagigah* 13a, *Pesaḥim* 94b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:6; *Tanḥuma, Terumah* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Terumah* 8; *Midrash Tehillim* 4:3; *Zohar* 1:18a, 35a, 76b, 78b (last two *ST*); 2:2a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 56 (69). Cf. above, note 100.

On the slackening of the wings, see Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 73–75.

The verse in Ezekiel reads in full: *I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, like the sound of Shaddai as they moved, a sound of tumult like the din of an army* (literally *camp*). *When they stood still, their wings slackened*.

149. **Five sounds…** The five iterations of the word קול (*qol*), *sound*, are appellations for five divine names, signifying five *sefirot*.

150. **one name, like the name…** Just as one divine name, *Shaddai*, appears in the list of sounds, so too does one

divine name, namely *El*, signifying *Ḥesed*, exist within all of the lower *sefirot*. In Zoharic Kabbalah, water symbolizes *Ḥesed*, and thus its *waters* inhere in the various appellations.

On the *mighty waters*, cf. Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 71.

151. ***sound of Shaddai...*** The etymological roots of the name *Shaddai* are unclear, but it is conventionally translated as "the Almighty." In that sense it alludes to the divine name *Elohim*, which is associated with judgment. In the Bible, the term *elohim* also refers to angels or human rulers who reflect divine power.

On the *sound* [or: *voice*] *of Shaddai*, see *Sifra, Vayiqra, nedavah* 1:11, 4a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:21; Rashi and Radak on Ezekiel 1:24; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 75; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 48.

152. **where merit dwells...** In contrast to the name *Elohim*, which refers to the harsh side of judgment, *Eloah* alludes to that aspect of *Malkhut*, which seeks out human worthiness.

On the name *Eloah*, see *Zohar* 1:94a; 2:96b, 97b, 172b; 3:23b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 100 (127). On this passage, cf. *Matoq mi-Devash*.

153. **upon which Jacob dwells...** Jacob alludes to *Tif'eret*, symbolized by *sound*; and He rests upon *camp of Elohim*, representing *Malkhut*. The angelic legions below Her populate the encampment.

See *Targum Yonatan*, Rashi, Radak, and Qara on Ezekiel 1:24.

The context of the verse in Genesis (32:2–3) reads: *Jacob went on his way, and angels of God encountered him. When he saw them, Jacob said, "This is the camp of Elohim, God!" and he called the name of that place Mahanaim*.

154. **They cover a single body...** In Ezekiel 1:11, one pair of wings is separated, while the other pair covers the body. Here this is interpreted to mean that *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*

remain distinct until they coalesce together under the aegis of the "single body," alluding to *Tif'eret*.

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *Their faces and wings were separated above; each had two joining each, and two covering their bodies*.

155. **hewn in the letters...** All the wings, signifying epithets of God, abide in the esoteric forty-two-letter name. This name stands beneath both *Binah* and *Malkhut*, represented by "two stones," referring to the stones that God fashioned into the tablets given to Moses. The entire ensemble manifests divine unity, thus glorifying the name of the blessed Holy One.

The Name of Forty-Two Letters is mentioned in the name of Rav, though not recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. Jacob ben Meir Tam (Rabbenu Tam) is the first to suggest that this name consists of the first forty-two letters of the Torah. For sources, see above, p. 381, n. 27.

On the "two stones," see *Zohar* 2:84b. Cf. M *Avot* 5:2.

156. **concealed in the side of *Adam*...** This is Primordial Adam, the figure representing the male figure who dwells above the female *Malkhut*, imaged as sitting upon the throne. For the kabbalist, the two versions of the Ten Commandments have opposing gender valences. In the version in Exodus—זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to hallow it*—the verb *zakhor* suggests זכר (*zakhar*), "male," signifying the male divine potency (centered in *Tif'eret*). Further, *Remember* implies the 248 positive commandments of Torah (since time-bound positive commandments are traditionally understood as being incumbent only on men). Meanwhile, in the version in Deuteronomy—שמור (*Shamor*), *Guard, the Sabbath day to hallow it*—the verb שמר (*shmr*), "to guard, keep," pertains to the female. *Shamor* alludes to the 365 negative commandments (incumbent on women as well).

The number forty-eight apparently derives from *Avot* 6:5–6: "The Torah is acquired with forty-eight methods...."

On the 248 limbs, see M *Oholot* 1:8; BT *Nedarim* 32b, *Makkot* 23b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 69:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:1; Eleazar of Worms, *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 679; Ezra ben Solomon of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim* (in *Kitvei Ramban*, 2:548); *Zohar* 1:80b (*ST*), 109a (*Tos*); 2:70b, 92b, 138a, 162b; *ZḤ* 77d (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 132, 262; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amey ha-Mizwoth*, 294, 428; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 127–28; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1157–58. Cf. *ZḤ* 90d (*MhN, Rut*).

On *zakhor* and *shamor* as pertaining respectively to male and female, see BT *Berakhot* 20b; *Bahir* 124 (182); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim* (in *Kitvei Ramban*, 2:496–97); Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:8; Jacob ben Sheshet, "Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon," 420; *Zohar* 1:5b, 47b, 48b, 164b, 199b, 248a; 2:70b, 91a, 92a–b, 92a (*Piq*), 138a, 165b; 3:81b, 92b (*Piq*), 115b, 224a; *ZḤ* 85a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 118; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110; Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 63–71.

157. **Upper throne draws them…** "Upper throne" represents *Binah*, who extracts the essence of the commandments from "spring," symbolizing *Ḥokhmah*, whose essence is unknowable.

The context in Job (28:12–13) reads: *But* חכמה (*ḥokhmah*), *wisdom*, מאין (*me-ayin*) *from where* (hyperliterally, *from nothing*, signifying *Keter*), *is it found; and where is the place of* בינה (*binah*), *understanding*? *No human knows its worth; and it cannot be found in the land of the living*. See *Zohar* 1:141b, 145a; 2:123a; 3:65b, 292a (*IR*).

158. ***six steps…*** The *six steps* leading to Solomon's throne correspond to six rungs that support the lower throne, signifying *Malkhut*, as well as to the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod* that support *Binah*. On account of the terror that the two groups feel toward their respective thrones, they can apprehend neither those thrones, the ones seated upon

them, nor the site of their union. Before the ultimate divine consummation, God is known primarily through epithets, and their power derives from the divine names associated with them.

159. **established enduringly in joy…** The slackening of the wings of the living creatures signifies the blissful union of throne and its occupant. In the intimacy of that bond—*when they stood still*—there are no mediating epithets, symbolized by *wings*. At that time, God is known through the divine names themselves.

160. כעין חשמל **(*ke-ein ḥashmal*), *as of amber…*** The precise meaning of the term is unclear, but the context in Ezekiel indicates a bright substance. It has been rendered *amber*; *gleaming amber*; *glowing metal*.

See above, note 34. It is noteworthy that the *Zohar* does not interpret Ezekiel 1:26, presumably as an indication that its meaning is too esoteric to reveal in writing. That verse reads: *Above the firmament over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne. And upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of* אדם (*adam*), *a human being, upon it above*.

161. **fleeting vision…** At the beginning of his prophetic vision, Ezekiel saw the *ḥashmal* fleetingly; but at the end, he was unable to see it. This change in perception explains his use of the different forms of the verb ראה (*r'h*). On account of its brilliance, one can behold the *ḥashmal* only through brief glances, with the physical technique of blinking resembling the flashing quality of the *ḥashmal* itself.

The rhetorical distancing of the phrase *ke-ein ḥashmal, as of amber*, indicates that even when Ezekiel saw the *ḥashmal*, the viewing was compromised by the splendor. Further, above the *ḥashmal* that can be seen, there is another above that cannot be seen by the human eye, but rather perceived only in the mind's eye, with eyes sealed. Apparently the lower *ḥashmal* is associated with *Malkhut*, and is perceived with colors, whereas the upper one is associated with *Binah*, who

is represented by the second *he* of the tetragrammaton. She is symbolized here by the *he* in the verb ואראה (*va-er'eh*), *I saw*, from Ezekiel 1:1.

The form of the verb ראה (*r'h*) without the final *he* is the expected form because verbs whose last root letter is weak are apocopated in the so-called *vav*-consecutive form. However, some instances of this verb use the longer form. Regardless, the meaning of the two forms is the same. Cf. above, note 28.

On blinking or squinting as a technique, see *Zohar* 1:97a–b (*ST*).

Even in its simple sense, the phrase כעין חשמל (*ke-ein ḥashmal*) is ambiguous. It can mean *as of ḥashmal*; *like the eye is the ḥashmal*; or *like the color of ḥashmal*. On the underlying term עין (*ayin*) as "color," see Leviticus 13:5, 55; Numbers 11:7; Proverbs 23:31. See Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 43. On the inability to apprehend the concealed *ḥashmal*, see *Targum Yonatan* on Ezekiel 1:27; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §371; Rashi and Radak on Ezekiel 1:27. See above, note 28.

The verse in Ezekiel reads in full: *I saw a gleam as of amber—what looked like a fire encased in a frame—from the appearance of his loins upward; and from the appearance of his loins downward, I saw something with the appearance of fire. There was a radiance all about him.*

162. ***ḥashmal* that is seen with colors...** The appearance of colors that one can see in the lower *ḥashmal* are a verisimilitude of the actual colors of the *ḥashmal*. Unlike the upper *ḥashmal* that cannot be seen at all, the lower one manifests in multiple tints, like *Shekhinah*. The predominant color fluctuates, apparently depending upon which *sefirah* is most influential at a given moment.

On החשמל (*ha-ḥashmal*), *the ḥashmal*, see Ezekiel 1:4; cf. ibid. 8:2.

163. **Another light...** Rabbi El'azar emphasizes that the rhetorical distancing of the phrase *as of ḥashmal*

indicates that Ezekiel did not actually see the *ḥashmal* at all, only an approximation of it.

164. **first vision…** The contrasting images and their sequence in Ezekiel 1:4 and 1:7 are interpreted as references to the different appearances of the top and bottom halves of the figure riding upon the chariot—the first is *as of ḥashmal*, the second with *the appearance of fire*.

Cf. Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 73. The distinction of above and below the figure's loins derives from Ezekiel 1:27 (quoted above, note 161). See above, note 88.

165. **three colors…** The three images are explained as three aspects of Divinity, one within the other. Each one represents a different divine name and *sefirah*: *ḥashmal* signifies *Adonai* and *Malkhut*; *fire* signifies *Elohim* and *Gevurah*; and *radiance* signifies *YHVH* and *Tif'eret*. Ezekiel gazed above and gained his vision through the looking-glass of Faith, representing *Shekhinah*—who can also be spoken of as looking "below," since She is the lowest of the *sefirot*.

On the divine names associated with this verse, see Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 77–78.

The text ends abruptly here in both the manuscripts and printed editions, with the conclusion apparently lost.

1. **Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said...** This opening appears to be in the middle of a passage whose beginning is missing. The Torah and its commandments serve an apotropaic function, protecting the pious from prosecuting angels above and enemies below.

The term “quaestor” and the theme of protection in this treatment of the story of Noah with its image of the dove may both derive from the story in BT *Shabbat* 49a: “Why did they call [Elisha] Man of Wings? Because on one occasion the evil kingdom of Rome issued a decree against Israel that they would pierce the brain of anyone who dons tefillin. Elisha would don them and go out to the marketplace. [One day,] קסדור (*qasdor*), an official, saw him; Elisha ran away from him, and the official ran after him. When the official caught up to him, Elisha removed [the tefillin] from his head and held them in his hand. The officer asked him, ‘What is that in your hand?’ Elisha replied, ‘Wings of a dove.’ He opened his hand, and they were indeed wings of a dove. Therefore, they would call him Elisha, Man of Wings. And what is different about doves’ wings from those of other birds? Because the Assembly of Israel is likened to a dove, as is said: *the wings of a dove are plated with silver*... (Psalms 68:14). As a dove is protected by its wings, so too with the people of Israel—the commandments protect them.”

“Quaestors” renders קסטירין (*qastirin*); it is apparently equivalent (in the singular) to the rabbinic term קוסטור (*qustor*), which derives from Latin *quaestor*, a Roman official or prosecutor. *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 188, relates the Zoharic term to the rabbinic קוסטינר (*qustinar*), which derives from Latin *quaestionarius*, “torturer, executioner.” See JT *Eruvin* 6:1, 23b; *Zohar* 1:19b, 53b, 62a (*Tos*), 128a; 2:58b, 175a; 3:13a; Angelet, *Livnat ha-Sappir*, 29c. Many Zoharic neologisms with the sound *qos, qoz*, or *qor* convey a sense of governance and authority. Cf. *ZḤ* 17c, 18d (both *MhN*).

“Happy” renders the Aramaic זכאין (*zaka’in*), which corresponds in usage to the Hebrew word *ashrei*. On this understanding of the term, see Liebes, “Zaka’in inun Yisra’el.”

“Admonished” renders יהב לון עיטא (*yahav lon ita*), “cautioned, advised.” On the Torah as advice or admonishment, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 322; *Zohar* 2:82b, 96b.

This passage is also printed in *Zohar* 1:254a (*Hash*), and its conclusion leads into the passage printed at 1:62b, where it appears to belong. Omitted here is *ZḤ* 1a–d, which also appears in *Zohar* 1:45b-46b and is printed in Vol. 1, pp. 241–49.

2. **On Rosh Hashanah…** See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “Three books are opened on Rosh Hashanah: one for the completely wicked, one for the completely righteous, and one for the intermediate. The completely righteous at once are inscribed and sealed in the book of life. The thoroughly wicked at once are inscribed and sealed in the book of death. The fate of the intermediate is suspended from New Year until the Day of Atonement: if they are deemed meritorious, they are inscribed in the book of life; if not, they are inscribed in the book of death.”

On the passage in *Rosh ha-Shanah*, see *Zohar* 1:37a–b; 3:100b, 149b; *ZḤ* 14b, 21c (last two *MhN*), 80b (*MhN, Rut*).

3. **advice for protection…** When the people of Israel turn back to God on Rosh Hashanah, they sound the shofar in this world. In turn, that shofar arouses the “celestial shofar,” symbolizing *Binah*, who transcends the realm of Judgment, representing *Gevurah*.

On the transformative power of the shofar, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:3, in the name of Shim’on son of Lakish: “*Elohim has gone up with a blast; YHVH, with a sound of the shofar* (Psalms 47:6). When the blessed Holy One ascends to sit upon the Throne of Judgment on Rosh Hashanah, He

ascends for Judgment, as is written: *Elohim has gone up with a blast*. But as soon as the people of Israel take their shofars and blow them, immediately, *YHVH, with a sound of the shofar*. What does the blessed Holy One do? He rises from the Throne of Judgment and sits upon the Throne of Compassion, and He is filled with compassion for them, turning for them the Attribute of Judgment into the Attribute of Compassion."

The motif of the shofar causing God to move from one throne to the other probably derives from an interpretation of Psalms 81:4: *Blast the shofar on the new moon*, בכסה (*ba-kese*), *on the covering, for our festival day*. In some biblical manuscripts and rabbinic quotations, the word בכסה (*ba-keseh*) is spelled בכסא (*ba-kese*), and here Rabbi Ḥizkiyah implicitly interprets this as *at the throne*, based on כסא (*kisse*), "throne." See Proverbs 7:20; *Minḥat Shai* on Psalms 81:4.

On the earthly and sefirotic shofars, see *Zohar* 1:114a–b; 2:81b, 184a–b; 3:38b–39a, 92b, 99a–100b, 149a.

4. **sound going forth...** The blast of the shofar prevents the demonic prosecutor from entering the divine court, and it nullifies claims from the side of Judgment above.

"Denouncer" renders דלטורא (*delatora*), "informer," from the Latin *delator*.

5. **a goat...** In the Yom Kippur service in the Temple, a goat—the scapegoat—would bear the sins of Israel and be sent off into the desert for the demon Azazel. This would distract him and prevent him from defiling the Temple. Saved from mortal punishment, the faces of the people shine with pristine purity.

According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46, the scapegoat of Yom Kippur is intended to preoccupy Satan: "They gave him a bribe on Yom Kippur so that he would not prevent Israel from offering their sacrifice."

The word שעיר (*sa'ir*) means "goat, demon, satyr" and also "hairy." In Genesis 27:11, Esau is described as איש שעיר (*ish sa'ir*), *a hairy man*; and Esau and his descendants inhabited the land of שעיר (*se'ir*), *Seir* (see Genesis 32:4; 36:8–9). Moreover, Esau represents the demonic realm.

On assuaging the Other Side, see *Sifra, Shemini, Millu'im* 1:3, 43c; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 158–59; *Zohar* 1:11a, 64a–65a, 113b–114b, 138b, 145b, 174b, 190a, 210b, 247b; 2:33a, 111b, 130a, 141a, 152b, 154b, 157a–b, 169a, 181b, 184b–185a, 203b, 227a–b, 237b–239b, 242b, 266b, 269a (last two *Heikh*), 271b (*Piq*); 3:60b, 63a–64a, 63a–b (*Piq*), 79b, 101b–102a, 202b–203a, 224a–b, 248b, 258b–259a; *ZḤ* 46c, 67b (*MhN, ShS*), 86b–c, 87b–c (last two *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 165–67; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 124–27; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:453–54; 3:890–95, 959.

On *sa'ir*, see *Sifra, Aḥarei Mot* 9:8, 84a; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 306; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:2; *Bereshit Rabbah* 36:1; 65:15; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 5:1; 22:8; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:65a, 138b, 145b, 153a; 2:185a; 3:63a–64a. Cf. Isaac ha-Kohen, in "Qabbalot R. Ya'aqov ve-R. Yitsḥaq," ed. Scholem, 280; *Zohar* 2:213a; 3:25a–b, 41b; *ZḤ* 27a.

On Satan's inability to prosecute on Yom Kippur, see BT *Yoma* 20a; *Zohar* 1:64a, 114b; 2:184b; 3:63a, 102a, 248b.

6. **when the sins of humanity abound...** This alludes to the generation of Noah, when sin was pervasive. The Denouncer, signifying Samael, supplants the masculine aspect of Divinity and befouls *Shekhinah*—symbolized by the "Temple"—spreading misery.

Genesis 6:13 reads more fully: *God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me...."* Here, as often, the *Zohar* interprets the phrase *end of all flesh* as an epithet that refers to the *Sitra Aḥra* or Samael—that is, as *End of All*

Flesh. He is called that because he appears as the Angel of Death and consumes all mortal creatures.

See *Zohar* 1:35b, 54a, 58a, 62b–63a, 65a, 106a, 152b, 254b (*Hash*); 2:33a, 269a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 72c (*ShS*).

7. **Rabbi Yehudah opened…** CT1, P1, and P3 all continue with the passage found in *Zohar* 1:62b—which is translated in Volume 1. The next passage translated here is preceded by the editorial gloss (found in BD5 and the printed editions): "More on *parashat Noaḥ*," underscoring the editorial activity within *Zohar Ḥadash* in particular, and the *Zohar* in general. The identity of the speaker is unknown, as is often the case in *Zohar Ḥadash* on the Torah portions.

8. **תיבה (*teivah*), ark…** Noah's ark is interpreted symbolically as a reference to the sanctified individual, whose piety safeguards from all harm.

The style of the following section differs markedly from the preceding section.

9. **this is the body…** The ark is compared to the human body, which attains holiness with the entry of the divine name within, alluded to by Noah, Shem, and their wives. Traditional commentaries explain that Noah and his wife symbolize *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, respectively, while Shem and his wife symbolize *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, respectively. Together they express the survival of the divine name in the world. A secondary, inferior manifestation of God's name inheres within after the entry of Japheth, Ham, and their wives.

Cf. *Zohar* 3:10b–11b, 65b, 290b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 75b (*MhN, Rut*); Vol. 7, p. 61, n. 86; Vol. 11, p. 28, n. 6.

10. **אלהים (*Elohim*), *God, said to Noah…*** The name *Elohim* alludes to Judgment as manifest in *Shekhinah*. She cautioned Noah that the destroying angel named *End of All Flesh* had come with accusations against humanity.

On *End of All Flesh*, see above, note 6.

11. ***skylight…* mystery of the body** The skylight represents the divine name, which is made manifest by the

righteous soul, and which inhabits and redeems the human body.

12. **men and women separately…** Rabbinic interpretation explains the gender segregation in the verse's listing of participants as an indication that husbands and wives remained physically separate on the ark, reframing from sexual relations. Noah is called צדיק (*tsaddiq*), *a righteous man* (Genesis 6:9); and in the *Zohar* he symbolizes *Yesod*. Through his sexual abstinence, Noah manifests the fulfillment of the "holy covenant," and this in turn elicits God's mercy, as manifested by the name *YHVH*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 31:12, in the name of Rabbi Shemu'el son of Rabbi Yitsḥak: "When Noah entered the ark, procreation was forbidden him, as is written: *and you shall enter the ark, you and your sons* (Genesis 6:18)—apart; *your wife and your sons' wives* (ibid.)—apart. As soon as Noah departed, He permitted it [procreation] to him, as is written: *Come out of the ark, you and your wife*… (ibid. 8:16)."

See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 34:7; BT *Sanhedrin* 108b; *Tanḥuma, Noaḥ* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Noaḥ* 17; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 23 and Luria, ad loc.; Rashi on Genesis 6:18, 7:7, 8:16; Radak on Genesis 6:18, 8:16. Cf. *Zohar* 1:66b.

Genesis 6:18 reads in full: *I will establish My covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons, and your wife and your sons' wives with you*.

13. **attribute of compassion…** The entry of the soul into the body is depicted as an act of compassion, commanded by *YHVH*, rather than an ordeal to be endured.

14. ***every animal that is not pure…*** God instructs Noah to preserve a minimum of the impure animals to limit the influence of the side of impurity, even as it allows for impurity's continued existence. Ultimately, as indicated by the verse in Micah, the divine aim is to annihilate all supporting structures for the demonic realm.

15. **soul—called dove…** Rabbi Yehudah interprets the story of Noah's ark allegorically, explaining that the ark represents the body and the dove represents the soul. A soul tarnished with sin is prevented from ascending to its heavenly repose by hostile angels, signified by "raging waters." *Matoq mi-Devash* interprets the entire passage in terms of the soul's nightly ascent to the Garden of Eden, sometimes impeded on account of its transgressions.

On the soul as *yonah*, meaning either "dove" or "Jonah," see *Zohar* 2:199a; *TZ* 21, 53a.

Genesis 8:8 reads in full: *He sent out the dove to see whether the waters had abated from the surface of the earth*.

16. **barred from the heavenly world…** Prevented repeatedly from attaining eternal rest after the first attempt, the soul hovers near the corpse in the grave. When the soul first entered the body at birth, they were pristine; but now both are blemished—as symbolized by the setting sun.

Genesis 8:9–11 read in full: *But the dove found no resting place for its foot and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were over all the earth. He reached out and took it and brought it back to him into the ark. Then he waited another seven days and again sent out the dove from the ark. The dove came back to him toward evening and, look, a plucked olive leaf was in its bill, and Noah knew that the waters had abated from the earth*.

17. ***the watchmen found me…*** The *watchmen* allude to the angels of destruction who abuse the soul in its attempts to rise up to heaven. But these afflictions cleanse the soul, as signified by the *plucked olive leaf… in its bill*; and the waters, symbolizing the demonic forces, are nullified. *Matoq mi-Devash* explains that after the traditional seven days of mourning, the soul has clearance to ascend.

The context in Song of Songs (5:6–7) reads: *my soul went forth* [or: *I went faint*]…. *The watchmen who go round the town found me. They struck me, they wounded me, they pulled my veil from me, those watchmen of the walls*.

18. **secreted away** The body rests in the ground until the eschatological age in which the dead are resurrected, as alluded to by *God remembered Noah*.

19. **A ship…** Referring to the ship in which the prophet Jonah took refuge, in which there were people from multiple nations and multiple deities. A person who holds such confused beliefs is doomed like Jonah's ship, for this demonstrates an absence of holiness. Here, "Ishmaelites and children of Esau" refers to Muslims and Christians. In contrast, Noah was instructed to build an ideal vessel, suitable for housing his eminent soul. *Nishmeta de-nishmeta*, "Soul of soul," is the highest of four components of the soul, each of which corresponds to a letter of the tetragrammaton; as seen above (note 9), Noah represents the letter *yod*.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina: "Men of seventy languages were there on the ship, and each one had his abomination in his hand, as is said, *The sailors were afraid, and each man cried out to his god* (Jonah 1:5). They prostrated themselves, saying, 'Let each man call out in the name of his god—and the god who shall reply and deliver us from this trouble, he shall be God.'"

On the four components of the soul, see Vol. 11, pp. 26–27, nn. 3–4.

20. **Why two times?…** לֵךְ (*Lekh*) means "go." The following word, לְךָ (*lekha*), has the same spelling but is actually a prepositional phrase that literally means "to you, for you"; idiomatically it lends the verb the sense of "separate; take leave of." Rabbi Yehudah's question about doubling apparently applies to both the doubled expression *lekh lekha* and to the pair of ostensibly redundant specifiers that follow: *from your land, from your birthplace*. He

explains that *land* alludes to the sefirotic place of origin of souls, and *birthplace* signifies the ethereal body that souls assume in the Garden of Eden.

On the doubled phrasing, see Vol. 4, p. 134, n. 235. On ethereal bodies, see Vol. 11, pp. 158–59, n. 373.

Genesis 12:1 reads in full: *YHVH said to Abram, 'Go you forth from your land, from your birthplace* [or: *kinfolk*], *from your father's house to the land that I will show you*.'

21. **celestial Jerusalem…** Symbolizing the Garden of Eden, the zone from which souls emerge into the world and embodied existence.

On the stages of the soul's journey into the world, see 3 Enoch 43:3; *Bahir* 15 (23), 126 (184); Naḥmanides on Genesis 2:7; *Zohar* 1:12b–13b, 28b (*TZ*), 59b, 62a, 76b, 81a–b (last two *ST*), 82b, 113b (*MhN*), 119a, 181a, 182a, 186b, 197a, 198a, 205b–206a, 209a; 2:12a, 70a, 95b, 98b, 99b, 157a, 161b, 174a, 223b, 246a, 253a, 259a (last three *Heikh*); 3:13a, 46b, 174b, 177b; *ZḤ* 10b–c (*MhN*), 69b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 93; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 28–30, 100 (34–36, 127); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:179–80; 2:692–703, 749–52; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 179–80, 226. Cf. BT *Yevamot* 62a, 63b, *Niddah* 13b.

22. **pattern with Noah…** The literary rendering of the Noah story mirrors precisely the fate of the soul after death. The soul is removed from the body, represented by the dove and ark respectively. The soul then endures its designated punishment, symbolized by the "raging waters." Then, although the soul may hover near the body for some period of time, it does not ultimately return.

23. **Rabbi Yehudah said…** The identical passage can be found in *Zohar* 1:69b.

24. ***Pharaoh put men…*** Alternatively, *Pharaoh put agents* [or: *deputies*], etc. This fragmentary passage appears in *Zohar* 1:82a (standard editions) and continues there.

25. **shield for the righteous…** In Genesis 12, Abram and Sarai go to Egypt to procure food, whereupon Sarai is taken to the king as a captive; the blessed Holy One watches over both Abraham and Sarah in this dangerous situation. The context here (12:17) reads: *YHVH plagued Pharaoh and his household with great plagues* על דבר שרי (*al devar Sarai*), *because of Sarai, Abram's wife*. Rabbinic teaching interprets the complex preposition *al devar Sarai* hyperliterally to mean *at the word of Sarai*. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 40(41):2: "Rabbi Levi said, 'That whole night, an angel was standing with a whip in his hand. When she said, "Strike!" he struck; when she said, "Stop!" he stopped.'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 52:13; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 5; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 8; Rashi on Genesis 12:17; *Zohar* 1:113a; 3:52a. On the verse in Proverbs, see Rashi, ad loc. On Abraham's divine trials, see Jubilees 17:17; 19:8; M *Avot* 5:3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 33; B, 36; *Midrash Tehillim* 18:25; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 26; *Zohar* 1:82a.

26. ***like a palm tree…*** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 40(41):1: "*YHVH plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues*.... It is written *The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon* (Psalms 92:13). As the palm and the cedar have neither crooked curves nor excrescences, so the righteous have neither crookedness nor excrescences.... As the heart of the palm and the cedar is directed upward, so are the hearts of the righteous directed toward the blessed Holy One.... As the palm and the cedar have desire, so have the righteous desire. And what is their desire? The blessed Holy One…"

In rabbinic literature, an otherwise unspecified reference to "Rabbi" refers to Rabbi Yehudah the Prince, who flourished in the early third century.

27. **One time…** This passage is also printed in *Zohar* 1:255a–b (*Hash*). Cf. Rosenberg, *Dreams of Being Eaten Alive*, 90–91.

28. **thirty righteous ones…** God’s promise that Abraham would become a great nation was contingent upon the existence of thirty righteous ones in every generation.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 49:3: “Rabbi Tanḥum said… in the name of Rabbi Berekhiah, “‘[God] assured him that the world would never lack thirty righteous ones like Abraham.’ Rabbi Yudan and Rabbi Aḥa, in the name of Rabbi Alexandri, deduced it from here: *Abraham* הֹיָה יִהְיֶה (*hayoh yihyeh*), *will surely become*: י (*yod*) is ten, ה (*he*) five, י (*yod*) ten, and ה (*he*) five.”

See JT *Avodah Zarah* 2:1, 40c; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:15; *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 13; *Miqqets* 6; *Midrash Tehillim* 5:5; *Zohar* 1:105b; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:239, n. 164. Cf. BT *Sukkah* 45b, *Ḥullin* 92a.

29. **Uzza and Aza’el** According to ancient legend, the angels Uzza and Aza’el opposed the creation of Adam and Eve, fell from heaven, and were attracted by *the daughters of men* (Genesis 6:2). Here, the angel is warned that he will be reduced to a mortal like them.

See 1 Enoch 6–13; Jubilees 5:1–8; *Targum Yerushalmi* on Genesis 6:4; BT *Yoma* 67b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 34; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 22; *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Genesis 44; *Shemḥazi ve-Aza’el* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 4:127–28); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot Literature*, §8; Rashi on *Niddah* 61a, s.v. *benei aḥi’ah*; *Zohar* 1:9b, 19b, 23a, 25a–b (last two *TZ*), 37a, 37a (*Tos*), 55a, 58a, 126a, 133b; 2:112b, 178b–179a (*SdTs*); 3:60b, 144a (*IR*), 194a, 207b–208b, 212a–b, 233a–b; *ZḤ* 81a (*MhN, Rut*); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 1:147–51; 4:169–72; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:631–32; Bamberger, *Fallen Angels*; Reed, *Fallen Angels*. Cf. Testament of Solomon 6:1–4; Orlov, *Dark Mirrors*, 47–81.

30. **let twenty suffice…** Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai echoes the negotiations that Abraham conducted with God for the city of Sodom, but surpasses his ancestor’s efforts.

On Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai’s bold self-assessment, see BT *Sukkah* 45b: “I have seen the sons of ascent [i.e., those privileged to ascend to heaven] and they are few. If they number one thousand, I and my son are among them; if they number one hundred, I and my son are among them; if they number two, they are I and my son.”

See JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:15; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot) 602.

The verse reads וצדיק יסוד עולם (*ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*), whose simple sense is *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*; but it is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71, 123 (102, 180); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34.

31. **you annul below…** See BT *Mo’ed Qatan* 16b, where according to Rabbi Abbahu, God says: “I rule the human being. And who rules Me? A righteous person. For I issue a decree and he annuls it.”

See *Zohar* 1:191b.

32. **everything associated with him is red…** Scripture refers to האדום (*ha-adom*), *red*, twice to indicate that Esau’s association with that color exists on both literal and symbolic levels. Red is the color of Judgment, exercised against the people of Israel when they are sinful, and against their enemies in the ultimate redemption. In rabbinic literature אדום (*edom*) Edom, symbolizes Rome; in medieval Jewish literature it also stands for Christianity, under which the Jews suffered. The lover in Song of Songs alludes to *Shekhinah* in Her aspect as male warrior, returning from slaughtering Israel’s enemies, as indicated in the verses from Isaiah.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:12; 75:4; *Zohar* 1:139b (standard editions), 238b; Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 25:30.

Genesis 36:43 reads in full: *These are the chieftains of Edom by their settlements in the land of their holdings—that is, Esau, father of Edom*.

Isaiah 63:1–2 read: *Who is this coming from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah—majestic in His attire, striding in the greatness of His strength? 'It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save.' Why is Your clothing red, Your garments like his who treads in a winepress?* Bozrah was the ancient capital of Edom.

This fragmentary passage is also printed in the standard editions of *Zohar* 1:139b; there, Cordovero identifies it as a passage of *Tosefta*.

33. ***Jacob took himself rods…*** The Zoharic text interprets ויקח לו (*va-yiqaḥ lo*), *took himself*, as *took for himself*; even though the story of the rods appears to describe magical animal husbandry practices, in fact it is about Jacob's own spiritual development. Jacob chooses rods because they resemble the letter ו (*vav*)—which is the third letter of the tetragrammaton, signifying *Tif'eret*, which in turn is Jacob's mystical rung. The term לבנה (*livneh*), *poplar*, is interpreted as an anagram, comprising בן (*ben*), *son*, and לה (*le-he*)—meaning that *Tif'eret* is the "son" (as the primary beneficiary of divine overflow) from the first *he* of the tetragrammaton, symbolizing *Binah*.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *Jacob took rods of fresh poplar, almond, and plane, and peeled white stripes in them, exposing the white of the rods*. On the story of Jacob's use of the rods, see *Zohar* 1:161a–b, 161b (*Mat*), 162a–b (*ST*).

34. **from the side of water…** Jacob chose *poplar*, which renders לבנה (*livneh*), though ancient interpreters read it as *levanah*, "white." The freshness and whiteness both indicate that the *poplar* symbolizes *Ḥesed*. The *almond* tree signifies *Gevurah*, most likely because of its pink flowers. The mature bark of the *plane* tree peels off easily in irregularly shaped patches, producing a dappled appearance. That

hybrid appearance suggests the combined identity of *Tif'eret*, which blends *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. Jacob has the requisite ערמימותא (*armimuta*), "subtlety"—playfully derived from ערמון (*armon*), *plane*—to combine these seemingly incongruous elements. Jacob needed to be shrewd to combat the trickery of Laban.

The associations of the poplar probably derive from the white undersides of its leaves, and the fact that it thrives near water. *Almond* renders לוז (*luz*), which is the Aramaic term for almond. It is identified here with fire (and thus with the color red), most likely on account of its flowers, which range in color from white to pink. However, the term itself can also connote "to turn, bend, twist," or "to be perverse," referring to the darker aspects of judgment. Of the two strains of the almond species that grows in the land of Israel, one (*Amygdalus communis* var. *amara*) produces bitter fruit and contains a poisonous alkaloid that is destroyed only with roasting—a fitting analogy for the activity of *Gevurah*. *Plane* renders ערמון (*ermon*), following RSV, NJPS, and Alter. *Targum Yerushalmi* identifies it as *Nerium oleander*.

Jacob's reputation for being cunning begins with his naming. According to Genesis 25:26, when Esau and Jacob were born, Jacob's hand was *grasping Esau's* עקב (*aqev*), *heel*, and Jacob's name יעקב (*Ya'aqov*) is etymologized as "heel-grabber." In Genesis 27:36, Esau adds another layer of etymology by linking *Ya'aqov* with the verb ויעקבני (*va-ya'qeveni*), *he deceived me*—referring to how Jacob cunningly obtained Esau's birthright, and later deceived Isaac into giving him Esau's blessing.

On the poplar, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 73:10; *Targum Onqelos*; *Targum Yerushalmi*; Rashi. On the almond, see M *Kil'ayim* 9:8; BT *Ḥullin* 25b; *EJ*, s.v. "Almond." On the plane tree, cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*. On Jacob's shrewdness, see *Zohar* 1:138a–139b, 143a, 146a; Moses de León, "She'eilot u-Tshuvot," 45–49.

35. ***In them*? It should say *in it*...** Why does Scripture use the singular form מקל (*maqel*), *rod*, and then the plural pronoun בהן (*ba-hen*), *in them*? The seven lower *sefirot* that are listed in the verse from Chronicles are all contained within the whiteness that symbolizes the single *sefirah* of *Ḥesed*, thus accounting for the plurality within an all-encompassing unity. Jacob's actions account only for "fire" (representing *Gevurah*) and "white" (representing *Ḥesed*), but as metonyms those two stand for all of the lower *sefirot*.

The verse in Chronicles reads: *Yours, O YHVH, are the greatness and the power and the beauty and the victory and the splendor—yes, all that is in heaven and on earth. Yours, O YHVH, is kingship*. Quoted often in kabbalistic literature, this biblical list of divine qualities is understood to designate *Ḥesed* (also called *Gedullah*), *Gevurah*, *Tif'eret*, *Netsaḥ*, *Hod*, *Yesod* (known as *All*), and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *earth*), who is joined with *Tif'eret* (*heaven*).

On the convergence of colors in the rods, see *Zohar* 1:161b, 258b, 261a (last two *Hash*); *ZḤ* 52a (standard editions). On the kabbalistic significance of the verse in Chronicles, see Isaac the Blind, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 4, 16; Asher ben David, "Sefer ha-Yiḥud," 101; *Zohar* 1:31a, 235b, 241a–b, 257b (*Hash*); 2:40b, 178b (*SdTs*); 3:24a, 92a, 137b (*IR*), 148a; *ZḤ* 26c; T1, 117b; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 51, 58, 92–93; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 34a, 68b, 91b, 99a.

36. **seven rods...** The *Zohar* proceeds to demonstrate how the seven *sefirot* alluded to esoterically in 1 Chronicles 29:11 are all contained in the story of Jacob and the rods. Each singular instance of the term *rod* is counted as one, while each plural instance is counted as two, arriving at a sum of seven.

The "seven rods" correspond variously to the seven iterations of the phrase *the voice of YHVH* in Psalms 29, the seven pillars of the verse from Proverbs, and the seven days of creation. On the seven pillars, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b

(quoted below, note 75); *Zohar* 1:82a–b, 186a, 231a; *ZḤ* 3a (*MhN*), 76b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 199; idem, *Shushan Edut*, 338–39; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 87, 119.

Numerous texts from the rabbinic corpus extol the number seven. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18: "The blessed Holy One created seven firmaments… seven lands… seven mountains… seven seas… seven deserts… seven worlds…. The seventh world is entirely Sabbath…"

Genesis 30:38–39 read in full: *He placed the rods that he had peeled in the channels, in the watering troughs where the flock came to drink, facing the flock. Now they were in heat when they came to drink. They came to be in heat by the rods; and the flocks bore brindled, spotted, and speckled young*.

37. **this rod…** Why are two names given for the same mystical instrument?

The full verse in Exodus reads: *So Moses took his wife and sons, mounted them on an ass, and went back to the land of Egypt; and Moses took the staff of God with him*.

38. מקל **(*mi-qol*), *from voice*…** Engaging in wordplay, the anonymous speaker explains that the word מקל (*maqel*), *rod*, should actually be read as מקל (*mi-qol*), *from voice*, building on the deficient form here of the word קל (*qol*), written without the vowel-letter *vav*. This creative reading demonstrates that the rod used by Jacob signifies the mystical union that he attained, since קל (*qol*), *voice*, is associated with Jacob and represents his rung of *Tif'eret*. Further, as indicated above (see note 33), the shape of the *rod* itself resembles the letter *vav*, supplying the missing letter that symbolizes Jacob. (Note, however, that in the manuscripts and the printed editions the word *qol* is written in its full spelling, with a vowel letter.)

On voice signifying *Tif'eret*, see *Zohar* 1:36a, 145a–b, 246b; 2:3a, 25b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 335, 368–69; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 96.

39. **two supports…** The term מטה (*matteh*), *staff*, refers to Moses and Aaron, who—as symbols of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*—represent the legs (or supports) of the divine anthropos. These *sefirot* are also the sources of prophecy.

The homily concludes by saying first that one who is dedicated to studying the Torah and observing its laws—and thus fortifying it—is in turn supported in his commitment. The second message indicates esoterically that the purpose of giving the Torah to the Jews was for the sake of revealing kabbalistic mysteries. This aggressive approach to the value of esoteric lore reflects polemics against philosophers like Maimonides and Samuel ibn Tibbon; conservative kabbalists like Naḥmanides; and supersessionist claims of the Christians. It also expresses the kabbalists' self-image as crucial figures in a cosmic-historical drama.

See the remarks of the fourteenth-century kabbalist David ben Yehudah he-Ḥasid, an early interpreter and translator of the *Zohar* (*Book of Mirrors*, 193): "Happy are the righteous in this world and the world that is coming, for the blessed Holy One revealed mysteries of the Torah to them that have not been revealed to any other people! This is as is written: *He did not do so for any other nation* (Psalms 147:20)."

The image of disciples derives from Isaiah 8:16: *Bind up the testimony; seal Torah among My disciples*. On *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* as the sources of prophecy, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 49, 78; *Zohar* 1:12b (*Mat*), 21b, 151b (*Tos*), 251b (*Mat*); 2:12b (*Mat*), 111b, 170a, 257b, 261b (last two *Heikh*); 3:35a, 36a, 61a, 90b, 91b; *ZḤ* 4b (*SO*), 45b–c; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 337; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 378–79; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 47–48 (57–59). Cf. Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 50:4. The notion of legs as pillars likely derives from Song of Songs 5:15: *His thighs, pillars of marble*.

On prophecy among the Zoharic kabbalists, see Mopsik, *Chemins de la cabale*, 137–47, 295–306. On the esotericism polemics, see Idel, "We Have No Kabbalistic Tradition"; Wolfson, "'By Way of Truth'"; Halbertal, *Concealment and Revelation*; Lachter, *Kabbalistic Revolution*, 15–44.

40. **Come and see** In the printed editions, the following passage (through 27b) appears in the section of *parashat Toledot* and is labeled *Sitrei Torah*, but the manuscripts (T1, T1*, V5, and P2) all bestow the title "From *parashat Vayeshev*," while including much material that is missing from the printed editions; the entire passage bears strong similarity to extended passages in Angelet, *Quppat ha-Rokhelin* and idem, *Livnat ha-Sappir*. See Meroz, "R. Yosef Angelet," 306. The material printed in the standard edition is also printed in *Zohar* 3:301b–302b (*Tosafot*).

41. ***Six days YHVH made…*** The simple sense of the verse is, of course, *For in six days YHVH made heaven and earth*; but the author favors a hyperliteral reading, which emphasizes the lack of the preposition ב (*be*), *in*, before *six days*, thereby turning the *six days* into the object of *YHVH*'s creative power: the *six days*—namely the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*—were themselves fashioned, or emanated, and they serve as the structure of the divine reality. The reference to "seven celestial days" is apparently an esoteric conflation of the original creation and the building of the Temple as described in 1 Kings 6:38: *He built it seven years*.

On the phrase *sheshet yamim*, see Exodus 20:11; Ibn Ezra on Genesis 14:4; *Bahir* 39 (57), 55 (82), 105 (158); Nahmanides on Exodus 20:11; *Zohar* 1:30a, 247a; 2:31a, 89b; 3:94b, 103b, 298b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 134; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 81b; Rashba, *Teshuvot*, 1:423. On the seventh day, cf. *Sullam; Matoq mi-Devash*.

The beginning of the text in V5, P2, and T1* reads: "Rabbi Shim'on said…"

42. **seven truly righteous ones…** These seven patriarchal figures are human incarnations of the divine

potencies—*Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*. The list of Abraham to David reflects the characters' mystical roots, rather than the biblical chronology. David is chronologically last of these biblical figures, and as a symbol for *Malkhut* he represents the last of the divine emanants; but in the Messianic era, he will lead. See *Zohar* 1:261 (*Hash*).

"Planted" renders שתיל (*shatil*), "established." See BT *Yoma* 38b; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 372–73. On the patriarchs as *ancient mountains*, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 353; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 5:21; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:4.

The full verse in Zechariah reads: *On that day, YHVH will shield the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and the feeblest among them on that day will be like David, and the House of David like a divine being—like an angel of YHVH before them*.

43. **fourth in days...** Symbolically, David (signifying *Shekhinah* or *Malkhut*) is the "fourth" since he is the fourth member of the sefirotic chariot. Further, *Shekhinah* is represented by the moon, which was created on the fourth day. In the divine erotic union (alluded to here by "delight from the House of the King"), the feminine *Shekhinah* is encompassed within the divine phallus, *Yesod*, which is represented here as Joseph.

On the chariot, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6, in the name of Resh Lakish: "The patriarchs themselves constitute the [Divine] Chariot." In Kabbalah the three patriarchs are joined by King David—signifying *Malkhut* as the fourth, stabilizing leg of the divine throne.

On *Shekhinah* as the "fourth" (day or leg of the throne), see Vol. 11, p. 663, n. 95. On *Shekhinah* as both fourth and seventh, see *Zohar* 1:5b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:278. Cf. *Zohar* 1:261a (*Hash*), where *Yesod* is counted as the fourth. On the feminine as contained in the masculine, see Vol. 11, pp. 389–90, n. 103.

44. **They all unite with *Shekhinah*...** While *Yesod* is the point of connection with *Shekhinah*, through *Yesod* seven *sefirot* bond with Her. *Shekhinah* is also known as בת שבע (*Bat Sheva*),

“Bathsheba,” literally “Daughter of Seven,” since She is “Daughter of Heavenly Mother”—the latter representing *Binah*, who generates all seven lower *sefirot*. (Alternatively, *Shekhinah* is called *Bat Sheva* because She receives the flow of all seven *sefirot* from *Binah* through *Yesod*, or because She includes all seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah* Herself.) Since Bathsheba symbolizes *Shekhinah*, she was destined for King David, who is intimately linked with *Shekhinah*, or *Malkhut* (Kingdom). Each of the *sefirot* manifests different aspects of Divinity, resulting in many names for God.

“Ten celestial lights” is the version recorded in T1; but T1*, P1, V5, and the printed editions record “*sefirot*” instead. Similarly, T1 offers strikingly divergent readings throughout this passage. Meanwhile, the manuscripts and printed editions refer several times to the *sefirot* and to “Kabbalah” in ways that Zoharic texts generally avoid. On the *Zohar*’s avoidance of these terms, see Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165–66.

On the significance of the name Bathsheba, see *Zohar* 3:6a, 37a, 115a; T118a (below, page 548). On David and Bathsheba, see 2 Samuel 11–12.

45. **She is seventh…** The biblical list of divine qualities from the verse in Chronicles (quoted above, note 35) is cited often in kabbalistic literature, with each of the qualities interpreted as a symbol of one of the *sefirot*. Though *Shekhinah* is represented as the fourth of days (see above, note 43), because She is subsumed within the male aspect of Divinity, *Yesod*, She is the seventh distinct *sefirah* alluded to in the verse.

46. **every one of the earthly patriarchs…** Each of the seven lower *sefirot* are the potencies through which the seven righteous ones know the blessed Holy One, and through which they unite mystically with *Shekhinah*. As the human exemplar of *Ḥesed*, Abraham acted with kindness to all.

See *Bahir* 132 (191) on Genesis 26:5, *Because Abraham has listened to My voice and has kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My teachings*: "What is the meaning of *My charge*? The Attribute of חסד (*Ḥesed*), Loving-kindness, said, 'As long as Abraham was in the world, I did not have to do my job. Abraham took my place and *kept My charge*. It is my task to bring merit to the world; and even when people are guilty, I bring them merit.... All this Abraham did, as is written: *Abraham planted a tamarisk at Beersheba*, [*and he invoked there the name of YHVH, everlasting God*] (Genesis 21:33). He would set forth his bread and water for anyone who would come, bringing them merit....'" See *Bereshit Rabbah* 54:6; *Midrash Tanḥuma, Noaḥ* 14; *Midrash Tehillim* 37:1; 110:1; Baḥya ben Asher, "Kad ha-Qemaḥ," 35–36; Margaliot, *Or Bahir* on *Bahir*, ad loc.; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah, Toledot* #32.

47. **Isaac knew Him...** Isaac is linked with *Gevurah*, which is also known as *Paḥad* ("Terror" or "Fear"). Jacob absorbs and mediates the divergent influxes from *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, as indicated by the verse from Genesis 31: *Were it not that the God of my father—the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac—was with me, you would have sent me away now empty-handed*.

On the verse from Genesis 31, see *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 15:16, which links *the Terror of Isaac* with the fear felt by Isaac as he was bound upon the altar.

48. **Joseph is called כלכל (*Khalkol*), sustainer...** In Egypt, Joseph stockpiled food for the seven lean years, reserving effectively food for the entire population. In concrete form, he manifests the role of *Yesod*—also known as כל (*kol*), "All," because He includes the entire flow of emanation and conveys it to *Shekhinah*. *Kol* is doubled here in the name Khalkol, which appears in 1 Kings 5:11: *Solomon was wiser than all men, than Ethan the Ezrahite and Heman and Khalkol and Darda*... See *Pirqei de-Rabbi*

Eli'ezer 39: "[Joseph] supported the land in the famine of bread; therefore was his name called Khalkol. And Khalkol is Joseph, as is said: ויכלכל יוסף (*va-yekhalkel*), *Joseph sustained*."

On *Yesod* as *kol*, see *Bahir* 14 (22); Naḥmanides on Genesis 24:1. On Khalkol, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 9:1. Cf. 1 Chronicles 2:6; BT *Sanhedrin* 44b.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*.

49. **Moses and Aaron—two cherubim…** The *ark of the covenant* signifies *Shekhinah*, who houses—in erotic intimacy—the Covenant, which alludes to *Yesod* (see next note). Stationed upon the ark in the Temple are two statues of cherubim, which are associated with Moses and Aaron, and which symbolize *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, the two legs of the divine body. The two chief angels Metatron and Sandalfon absorb divine overflow from *Shekhinah*, represented by "Sea."

See Isaac ha-Kohen, *Ma'amar al ha-Atsilut ha-Semalit*, 85 (and Scholem's n. 1); *Zohar* 1:1b; 3:236a (*RM*). Cf. Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim* (in *Kitvei Ramban*, 2:493); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 71.

50. **Ark of the Covenant…** In the Bible, the tablets that were given at Sinai are carried in the "ark," a chest constructed of acacia wood (see Exodus 25:10–16). In Zoharic Kabbalah, both the ark and "Justice" represent *Shekhinah*, who can contain the phallic member *Yesod*, which in turn is symbolized by Joseph. Here, that relationship is further reimagined with the recondite Written Torah as the male essence that abides within the expansive Oral Law. Usually, Written Torah symbolizes *Tif'eret*, but here it represents *Yesod*.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *A testimony He ordained it in* [or: *for*] יהוסף (*Yehosef*), *Joseph, when He went forth against the land of Egypt*. Here, the form of Joseph's name, which in this verse is expanded relative to the usual spelling יוסף (*Yosef*), is construed as including the divine name יה (*Yah*) within, thus "testifying" to Joseph's virtue.

On the sefirotic significance of *testimony*, see *Zohar* 2:221b, 229b; 3:14a, 213b; *ZḤ* 45b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 285. On the divine element within Joseph's expanded name in Psalm 81, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:10; BT *Sotah* 10b, 36b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 17, pp. 321–22; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:7; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:5; *Zohar* 2:221b; 3:213b.

51. **heavenly sons joined above...** These signify Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, and Joseph, who symbolize the central six *sefirot*: *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. A *baraita* (used here in a collective sense) is a tannaitic teaching that was not included in the Mishnah. The name derives from the root *br*, "outside"—that is, outside the scope of the canonized Mishnah. This is an apt description for *Malkhut*, who needs to be connected to the main body of *sefirot*.

"Received tradition" renders דברי קבלה (*divrei qabbalah*), a rabbinic phrase that signifies lore that was transmitted in the presumably post-Pentateuchal parts of the Hebrew Bible.

Yesod is known as Righteous One, based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). The verse literally means *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, but it is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See above, note 30.

On the rabbinic conception of *qabbalah*, see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 7a, 19a; *Ta'anit* 17b, *Ḥagigah* 10b, *Bava Qamma* 2b (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *divrei qabbalah*), *Ḥullin* 137a, *Niddah* 23a. *Maḥazor Vitri* 424 (p. 462) identifies such teachings as deriving from the time of Joshua.

52. **correspondence below...** This is a basic principle in Kabbalah—the fulfillment of the world above occurs as a result of its completion below. Here the cherubim, representing *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, stand upon the ark, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, containing the tablets, representing *Yesod*, within. *Yesod* is the completion of *Tif'eret*, who is also symbolized by Heaven, and who as such then unites with Earth,

symbolizing *Shekhinah*. Joseph's expanded and divinized name signifies this consummation.

On ontic parallelism, see *Tabula Smaragdina*, attributed to the legendary Hermes Trimegistus: "What is below is like that which is above; and what is above is like that which is below, to accomplish the miracles of one thing." See Newton, *The Chymistry of Isaac Newton*; Read, *Prelude to Chemistry*, 54.

53. **Casket of Joseph and the Ark of *Shekhinah*...** The Hebrew word ארון (*aron*) means both "casket" (or "coffin") and "ark." Joseph's embalmed body "was placed in a casket" while his soul "was placed in an ark"—namely in *Shekhinah*, who is called *ark of the covenant*, in reference to Her role as the receptacle of *Yesod*.

The vignette derives from an anecdote in rabbinic literature wherein passersby are astonished that a corpse should accompany the ark of the covenant. See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ Petiḥta;* BT *Sotah* 13a–b.

On the two caskets, see *Tosefta Sotah* 4:7; *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ, Petiḥta; Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 13:19; JT *Berakhot* 2:2, 4c; BT *Sotah* 13a–b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:12; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 2; *Zohar* 1:251a.

On *Shekhinah* as "Ark of the Covenant," see *Zohar* 1:2a, 33b, 50b, 59b, 228b, 251a; 2:13a, 214b, 235b, 259a–b (*Heikh*); 3:199a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 75 (95).

54. **Kingship...** The verse from 1 Chronicles (29:11) continues: *Yours, O YHVH, is kingship*. The divine structure is fully realized when David marries Bathsheba, who is represented in the verse by the term *kingship*. See above, note 35.

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *Thus shall they remain in the land that I gave to My servant Jacob and in which your fathers dwelt; they and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, with My servant David as their prince forever*.

The passage in Psalms (89:37–38) reads: *His seed shall be forever, and his throne like the sun before Me; like the moon, firm-founded forever—and the witness in the skies is faithful. Selah*.

55. **rose to three supernal rungs…** Abraham could not cleave to his own rank of *Ḥesed* until he recognized that there were superior gradations within the Godhead; he came to know them through *Shekhinah*, "speculum that presides at night." Subsequently, he attained his position of *Ḥesed*, associated with the first day of creation—the day that God created primordial light. The emphasis on knowledge that supersedes normal cognition, and on Abraham's childhood recognition of the blessed Holy One, underscores the supra-cognitive or precognitive qualities of mystical knowledge.

On Abraham's recognizing God, see BT *Nedarim* 32a, in the name of Rabbi Ami son of Abba: "Abraham recognized his Creator at the age of three years, as is said: "עקב (*Eqev*), *Because, Abraham has listened to My voice* [*and has kept My charge, My commandments*…] (Genesis 26:5). The numerical value [of the letters of the word *eqev*] is 172." Since Abraham lived for 172 years observing the commandments, and died at the age of 175, Rabbi Ami infers that Abraham attained his faith at the age of three. Here, as indicated by the use of the term דייקא (*dayyqa*), "precisely," those first three years signify the upper three *sefirot*, which cannot be known. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 64:4; 95:3; *Tanḥuma*, *Lekh Lekha* 3; *Behar* 1; *Tanhuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 4; *Vayiggash* 12; *Behar* 3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 5:16; *Esther Rabbah* 6:3.

The names Ancient One, Father, and Mother substitute here for the usual nomenclature of the top *sefirot—Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*. The printed editions read: "All cleave to their rungs from the midst of that speculum that presides at night, of which no human being is aware—truly!" This alternate reading suggests that these righteous ones

actualized themselves in relation to their rungs above, through their connection to *Shekhinah*. Nonetheless, this translation follows T1, V5, and P2, according to which one attains that achievement through contemplation of the rungs that one cannot know.

56. **three supernal rungs and the other seven…** Only after Abraham was illuminated by the radiance of the upper three *sefirot* could he fully unite with the seven lower ones. "Mystery of Mother of the blessed Holy One" signifies the cluster of three *sefirot* that culminate in "Mother" (or *Binah*).

Instead of "Mother," which follows the reading of T1, V5, and P2, the printed editions read "name"—a difference in one letter.

57. **illuminated by those three…** After receiving influx from the top three *sefirot—Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*—Abraham sought his rung of *Ḥesed* through the illumination of the other seven *sefirot, Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*. His mundane earthly action of selecting seven ewes, culminating with David, signified the seven righteous ones of Israel. Once they have all performed their roles in history, they correspond to the seven *sefirot* above. Abraham signals to Abimelech regarding the future perfection of the people of Israel, indicating the future time at which the world below will be an earthly replica of that above, holiness will vanquish wickedness, and David will triumph over the Philistines—the descendants of Abimelech.

The theme of "as above, so below" is a cardinal principle of Kabbalah. See, e.g., *Zohar* 1:38a (*Heikh*), 57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 172a, 205b; 2:5a, 15b, 20a (last three *MhN*), 48b, 82b, 144a–b, 186b, 195b, 231b, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:40b, 45b, 65b, 119a, 150a, 220a; *ZḤ* 15a, 19a (both *MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. On the similar Hermetic formulation, see *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262: "There is no doubt that the lower from the higher and

the higher from the lower produces wonders from one single operation."

58. **David is the seventh…** The author draws a series of correspondences between the biblical figures that signify the *sefirot* and a female figure through whom they engage and unite with *Shekhinah*. In the biblical context, Metheg-Ammah appears to be either a place name or a trophy. Here, the *Zohar* draws explicitly on an elaborate rabbinic legend (*Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 36) detailing King David's struggles to conquer the land of Israel: "[The Philistines] said [to Isaac], 'We know that the blessed Holy One will give to your descendants in the future all these lands; make a covenant with us, that your descendants will not take possession of the land of the Philistines.' He made a covenant with them. What did Isaac do? He cut off one ממתג אמה (*amah mi-meteg*), one cubit of the bridle, of the ass upon which he was riding, and he gave it to them that it might be in their hands for a sign of the covenant of the oath. When David reigned, he desired to enter the land of the Philistines, but he was unable to do so because of the power of the sign of the covenant of Isaac, until he had taken from them the sign of the covenant of Isaac's oath, as is said: *And David took meteg amah, the bridle of the cubit, out of the hand of the Philistines* (2 Samuel 8:1), and it is written: *So the Philistines were subdued, and they no longer came into Israelite country* (1 Samuel 7:13)." On the bridle bit, cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 52:7; *Shemot Rabbah* 20:1; *Zohar* 3:210b.

59. **not with goats…** In the Bible (Leviticus 4:27–31), *an unblemished female goat* is brought as a purification (or offense) offering by one who sins inadvertently. In the *Zohar*, the word for "goat," עֵז (*ez*), is understood to imply עַז (*az*), "harsh," namely harsh and demonic forces. Abraham sets aside ewes deliberately to avoid their malevolent influences, and aligns himself with the right side, from *Ḥokhmah* through *Ḥesed*.

On the demonic nature of goats, see Isaac ha-Kohen, in "Qabbalot R. Ya'aqov ve-R. Yitshaq," ed. Scholem, 280; *Zohar* 2:185a, 213a; 3:25b, 41b. Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 111b; *Zohar* 2:124b–125a; 3:72a. The synonym שעיר (*sa'ir*) means "goat, demon, satyr." On the שעירים (*se'irim*), "goat-demons," see Leviticus 17:7; *Sifra, Aḥarei Mot* 9:8, 84a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:8; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1462. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*, Leviticus 9:3.

"Wardens" renders גרדיני (*gardinei*), which derives from the Castilian *guardián*, "guardian." See *Zohar* 1:34a, 53b, 64b, 203b, 232a, 249a; 2:56a, 65a, 130a, 141a, 245b, 247b, 248a, 251b, 252a–b, 263a–b, 264b–265b (last seven all *Heikh*); 3:43a, 62b, 70a, 113b, 154b–155a, 163b, 175a, 210b–211a, 213b, 266a, 284a, 286b; *ZḤ* 46c; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 75a; Corominas, *Diccionario*, 3:246–48.

60. **revelation of *Shekhinah* from that well...** Although Isaac represents *Gevurah*, "Judgment," among the *sefirot*, he did not use goats for his treaty with Abimelech, but rather the power of *Shekhinah*, signified by the name *seven*, enacted at the well where they met. "Covenant" renders קים (*qeyam*), "foundation, pillar," which suggests here the intimate union of Isaac with *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the well.

On the well and its names, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 35; *Zohar* 1:60b, 151b–152a (*ST*). The full verse in Genesis reads: *He called it* שבעה (*shiv'ah*), *seven, therefore the name of the town is* באר שבע (*Be'er Sheva*), *Beersheba, to this day*. The context in Ezekiel reads: *Because you did not remember the time of your youth and were not in dread of me in all these matters, see, I am holding you to account for your ways, declares ADNY YHVH*.

61. **שבעה (*shiv'ah*), Seven...** Continuing with the theme of sevens, the *Zohar* contrasts the two names given to the well by Abraham and Isaac, respectively. While *sheva* and *shiv'ah* are simply the masculine and feminine forms of the same word ("seven"), the extra *he* used by Isaac is understood to represent Isaac's distinctive relationship with

Judgment. The verse from Ezekiel reads in context: הא (*he*), *see, I am holding you to account*. The author interprets the term *he*, which appears in only one other passage in the Bible, as a reference to the letter *he*, which of course is the second and fourth letter of the tetragrammaton. These two represent *Binah* and *Malkhut*, both of whom are associated with *Gevurah*, Judgment—the first as the source of Judgment, and the second as the *sefirah* through whom Judgment is enacted.

62. **He established it on Justice…** Without Justice, the moral order would disintegrate. The combined name *YHVH Elohim* fuses two names associated with *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, respectively, enabling the world to endure. According to the rabbinic tradition in *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:9, the word בהבראם (*be-hibbare'am*), *when they were created* (Genesis 2:4), should be read as an anagram: באברהם (*be-Avraham*), *by Abraham*. There, according to Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Korḥah, it indicates that *heaven and earth* were created for Abraham's sake.

On the world being created through blending *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15: "The blessed Holy One said, 'If I create the world by the quality of compassion, its sins will abound; by the quality of justice, the world will not endure. Rather, I will create it by both the quality of justice and the quality of compassion. Oh that it may endure!'" See *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:4; *Zohar* 1:230b; 3:38a.

On the world's being created with justice, see M *Avot* 1:18; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 43; *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:1; JT *Ta'anit* 4:2, 68a; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:13; Rashi on Genesis 1:1, s.v. *bara elohim*; *Zohar* 2:122a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 291, 345. On the combined name *YHVH Elohim* (often called the "complete name"), see *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; *Zohar* 1:4a, 20a; 2:39a, 113b, 161a, 229a; 3:138b (*IR*). On the distinctive qualities of these two names, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:3; *Shemot Rabbah*

3:6; *Zohar* 1:58b, 180b; *ZḤ* 70d (*ShS*). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3.

On בהבראם (*be-hibbare'am*) as an anagram, see Vol. 11, p. 186, n. 455.

63. **house of the world...** *Shekhinah* is called "house of the world" and "Foundation Stone" because She is the spiritual basis of our earthly world. Both Abraham and Isaac name the well—signifying *Shekhinah*—thus establishing a relationship with Her, but Abraham's choice of the town name prevails, as proven by the verse from Song of Songs; thus the right side, symbolized by Abraham, more fully embraces *Shekhinah*. *Ḥesed* (symbolized by Abraham) plants the sefirotic tree in *Shekhinah*—who is called באר שבע (*Be'er Sheva*), "Well of Seven," perhaps because She receives the flow of emanation from seven *sefirot* (*Binah* through *Yesod*), or because She is both a "well" and the "seventh" of the lower *sefirot*.

On Isaac's cleaving to the well, see *Zohar* 1:60b, 135b–136a; 3:24b, 103a, 115a, 150b, 183b, 284b. On *Shekhinah* as "house of the world," see *Zohar* 1:29a, 30b, 33a, 172a. Cf. *ZḤ* 60d (*MhN, ShS*); Vol. 11, p. 7, n. 14. On *Shekhinah* as "Foundation Stone," see *Zohar* 1:72a, 231a; 2:91b, 152a, 222a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 333; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 74–75 (95); Vol. 4, p. 526, n. 582. On *Shekhinah* as *Beersheba*, see *Zohar* 1:147a–b, 152b; 3:22b, 52b, 115a; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 6a.

64. **Four of the seven...** In addition to Abraham, three of the figures who signify the lower seven *sefirot* acquire their spouses through interactions at a well: Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. After Abraham's death, the Philistines filled in the well, spiritually darkening the world.

The key part of the verse in Genesis is not cited in the text. Both rabbinic and Zoharic literature often cite only part of a verse, while directing the homily's interpretation toward the following phrase, which is thus only alluded to.

In the *Zohar* such indirectness becomes an integral part of its practice of hinting at profound mysteries.

On the patriarchs' wives as being found at the well, see *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32; *Midrash Aggadah, Shemot* 2:15.

65. **It is spelled באֵרת (*be'erat*), *the well of*...** The abbreviated spelling of באֵרת (*be'erot*)—without the usual vowel-letter ו (*vav*) in the plural inflection—enables the phrase to be read as באֵרת (*be'erat*), *a well of*, alluding to *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the well that accompanied the patriarchs in their peregrinations.

The unusual gloss "in the feminine form" appears in T1 and V5, although it is absent in the printed editions.

66. **the Philistines filled the well with earth...** The world is desolate when the pursuit of knowledge of God and Torah is lacking. The term "well" frequently symbolizes *Shekhinah*. Since the word רואי (*ro'i*) derives from the root ראה (*r'h*), "to see," *Shekhinah* is perceived as "Well of Vision," leading the people to contemplation of the blessed Holy One.

On the world as desolate without Torah, see BT *Yevamot* 62b. On Genesis 25:11, see *Zohar* 1:130a (*MhN*), 135b–136a. Genesis 26:18 reads in full: *Isaac returned and dug the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had blocked up after Abraham's death; and he gave them names, like the names his father had called them*.

67. **From whom is She filled?...** This question continues the interpretation of the word *ro'i*: to whom does *Shekhinah* look to receive sacred influx? In Kabbalah, as in Neoplatonism, when an entity looks back toward its source, a new emanant emerges. *Matoq mi-Devash* identifies the source as *Yesod*, whereas *Sullam* identifies it as *Ḥokhmah*. "Seeing all" is a further development of the same trope.

Here the translation follows the printed editions, which read "seeing all," whereas the reading in T1 and V5 is "the lives of all."

68. **servants of Isaac…** The forces that derive from *Gevurah*, who is signified by Isaac, are harsh prosecutors. They cause the well, signifying *Shekhinah*, to act with judgment in the world. When Isaac personally intervened, however, those demonic forces could no longer run amok, and the well was called *Expanses* (or *Open Spaces*). Before Isaac, there was no Judgment in the world, so mercy prevailed even when Israel transgressed.

Though the biblical text does not explain the name שטנה (*Sitnah*), literally *accusation* [or: *hostility, enmity*], in rabbinic literature the noun is often construed as an allusion to שטן (*satan*), "Satan," the prosecuting angel.

Genesis 26:21–22 read in full: *They dug another well and they quarreled over it, too; and he called its name Sitnah. He moved on from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he named it* רחבות (*Reḥovot*), *Expanses* [or: *Rehoboth*], *saying, 'Because now YHVH* הרחיב (*hirḥiv*), *has provided room, for us, and we will be fruitful in the land.'* See Naḥmanides on Genesis 26:20.

69. ***gates of righteousness…*** The well, alluding to *Shekhinah*, is also pictured as an opening or gate, and She is called *righteousness*. She is *the gate to YHVH*—namely to *Tif'eret*, who is known as *YHVH*.

70. **Well of Seven…** Jacob, too, finds the well, namely *Shekhinah*. Since She is the recipient of divine overflow from the lower seven *sefirot*, Jacob says that he will serve Laban for seven years in order to acquire Rachel as a wife. The verse continues, specifying that Rachel is *your* קטנה (*qetanah*), *younger* [or: *smaller*], *daughter*. *Shekhinah*, represented by Rachel, is indeed the most diminutive of the *sefirot*, and lesser in relation to *Binah*, represented by Leah.

71. **[T1 116a]** At this point in the text, T1, V5, and P2 include a large amount of material that is absent from the printed editions. This translation will follow T1 as its base text until the standard edition resumes.

72. **טוב (*Tov*), *Good, that I give her to you…*** The full verse reads: *Laban said, "Good* [or: *Better*] *that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man."* The word *tov*, "good," designates *Yesod* (known as Righteous One), who channels the entire flow to *Shekhinah*, based on Isaiah 3:10: *Say of the righteous one that he is good*. Here, *Yesod* is viewed as the extension of *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Jacob.

On the traveling well, see *Tosefta Sukkah* 3:3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 1:2; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 12, 20, 21; *Tanḥuma* (*Buber*), *Ḥuqqat* 47, 48, 50; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 347. On the meaning of the verse from Psalms, see below, note 148.

73. ***generations of Jacob—Joseph…*** Jacob symbolizes *Tif'eret*, while Joseph symbolizes *Yesod*. The author, borrowing a playful midrashic reading, conveniently breaks off his quotation after the name *Joseph*. In the Midrash, the juxtaposition of their two names implies these two biblical heroes' similarity. Here, it implies that Joseph's sefirotic rung (*Yesod*) is the essential manifestation of Jacob's (*Tif'eret*), or that Joseph embodies all twelve tribes. The verse expresses this rank through reference to Joseph's symbolic age of seventeen—being bonded distinctively both with *Shekhinah*, called here "Mystery of Seven," and with all ten *sefirot*, called "Mystery of Ten." In the Hebrew, the word "seventeen" is written as a composite of "seven" and "ten," as exemplified by the verse. This is construed to mean that first Joseph united with the bottom seven *sefirot* and then with all ten.

On the reading as *Jacob—Joseph*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:6; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; *Tanḥuma, Noaḥ* 5; *Vayeshev* 1; *Miqqets* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayeshev* 5; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:7; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:5; *Zohar* 1:21b, 85a, 176b, 180a, 182b; 2:145a, 242a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 10 (12–13).

The full verse in Genesis reads: *These are the generations of Jacob: Joseph, seventeen years old, was tending the flock with his brothers, and he was a youth* [or *lad*] *with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father*.

74. **sitting at the head of the patriarchs…** The oil symbolizes the stream of emanation, elicited by *Yesod* from the highest realms. The movement of *Yesod* upward to instigate that flow, albeit unusual in the *Zohar*, is consonant with Zoharic depictions of the divine efflux within the Divine Brain as a flow from the divine phallus.

Concealed Brain is the third of the Holy Ancient One's three heads, as represented in the *Idrot* sections of the *Zohar*. Its appearance here supports a late dating for this text (or for this unit). On the three heads, see *Zohar* 3:129a, 130b, 131b, 140b (all *IR*), 288b–289a, 292a (both *IZ*); Vol. 9, pp. 774–75, nn. 22–24. According to the second-century Greek physician Galen, sperm originates in the brain; this theory was commonly accepted in medieval literature, including the *Zohar*. See *Bahir* 104 (155); *Zohar* 1:247b; 2:85b, 90a, 110b, 123b, 136b, 167a; 3:290a–b (*IZ*); Vol. 5, p. 469, n. 795.

75. **He is called Righteous above…** *Yesod* bonds both with the seven lower *sefirot*, tying them to *Shekhinah*, and with all ten *sefirot* as the channel through which holy overflow cascades. This central role enables *Yesod* to rise to the very top of Divinity.

The world is based on the structure of the seven lower *sefirot*, from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*. Their power is concentrated in *Yesod*, the cosmic pillar, who is known as Righteous One, based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). The verse literally means *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation* but is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b: “It is taught in a *baraita*: Rabbi Yose says, ‘Woe to them, the creatures who see and know not what they see; who stand and know not upon what they stand. Upon what does the earth stand? Upon pillars, as is said: *Who shakes the earth from her place, and her pillars tremble* (Job 9:6)….’ And the rabbis say, ‘The earth stands on twelve pillars, as is said: *He set the boundaries of peoples according to the number of the Children of Israel* (Deuteronomy 32:8).’ And some say, ‘Seven pillars, as is said: *She has hewn her seven pillars* (Proverbs 9:1).’ Rabbi El’azar son of Shammua says, ‘On one pillar, whose name is Righteous One, as is said: *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25).’” On the seven pillars, see above, note 36.

In Deuteronomy 33:15, the simple sense of *harerei qedem* is *age-old mountains*, where *qedem* means “primeval time.” Here, it refers to the uppermost reaches of Divinity.

76. **three truly righteous ones… sitting on his right…** The author depicts the lower seven *sefirot* as a seven-branched menorah, with *Yesod* in the middle. *Yesod* may be included as one of the three branches on the left, along with *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*; or as the middle branch, which represents *Yesod* and *Shekhinah* when they are united; or positioned above them all, as the menorah’s stem.

See BT *Menaḥot* 98b: “We have learned in a *baraita*: *When you light up the lamps, opposite the front of the lampstand shall the seven lamps give light* (Numbers 8:2). This teaches that they turned to face the middle lamp. Rabbi Natan said, ‘From here we learn that the middle one is specially prized.’”

On the seven branches of the lampstand and their sefirotic correlates, see *Zohar* 2:14b (*MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:132, n. 19. Cf. Rashi on Numbers 8:2.

77. ***Joseph was the governor over the land…*** The biblical figure Joseph overseeing the land symbolizes *Yesod*

as the ruler over *Shekhinah*. The phrase *These are the generations of Jacob—Joseph* is interpreted to mean that Joseph is the continuation of Jacob, who represents *Tif'eret*.

On the interpretation of the phrase *Jacob—Joseph* as praise, see sources cited above, note 73. Genesis 42:6 continues: *Joseph was the governor over the land; he was the provider to all the people of the land*.

78. ***land of his father's sojournings...*** If Joseph was born in Haran, a place whose name connotes wrath, how could he be the paradigmatic scion of Jacob? Once Jacob returned to Canaan, called here the "supernal land," signifying the union of *Tif'eret* with *Shekhinah*, Joseph attained his spiritual rank of *Yesod*. Then he fulfilled the purpose implied in Genesis 37:2: *These are the generations of Jacob—Joseph*.

The place name חרן (*Ḥaran*), "Haran," resembles the biblical noun חרון (*ḥaron*), "fury, burning, wrath." On Haran, see *Zohar* 1:78b–79a (*ST*), 147a, 147b (*Tos*), 148a (*ST*).

The verse in Genesis concludes: *in the land of Canaan*.

79. **attribute of Judgment ruled...** Jacob's act of dwelling in his father's *land* symbolizes the union of his *sefirah* (*Tif'eret*) with *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by land, and who is gripped by Isaac's *sefirah* (*Gevurah*), for whom She has an affinity. The *Zohar* interprets *megurei, sojournings of*, as deriving from the root גרה (*grh*), "stir up strife; attack." For the author, the verse implies: *Jacob dwelled in the land of his father's strife*.

Jacob's fear derives from Isaac's unique name for God: פחד יצחק (*Paḥad Yitsḥaq*), *Fear* (or *Terror*) *of Isaac*. This striking name appears only twice in the Bible (Genesis 31:42, 53). According to *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 15:16, it expresses the terror felt by Isaac as he was bound upon the altar by his father Abraham. Here, Jacob is frightened of Judgment because of his failure to visit his parents for twenty-two years; and indeed, Jacob was punished measure-for-measure through Joseph's being waylaid for twenty-two

years. This is another instance of Joseph's replicating Jacob as suggested by the equation: *Jacob—Joseph*. See BT *Megillah* 17a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayeshev* 5; Rashi on Genesis 37:34.

As indicated by Rabbi Levi (BT *Berakhot* 55b), twenty-two years elapsed between the first dream recounted by Joseph to his brothers (Genesis 37:7) and the dream's fulfillment (see Genesis 42:6).

80. ***seventeen…*** The number seventeen is broken down into its components of seven and ten to indicate that Joseph was united with the seven *sefirot* below and with the entirety of the ten *sefirot*. See above, note 73.

81. **What were the actions of Joseph…** The simple meaning of Genesis 37:2 is that Joseph was *shepherding* [or: *tending*] *the flock with his brothers*, but the *Zohar*'s hyperliteral reading interprets *ro'eh* according to another sense of that verb, as "feeds, pastures, grazes"—with *his brothers* as its direct object—indicating that Joseph was actually ministering to them, who symbolize *Shekhinah*. Similarly, Genesis 49:24 reads: *From there*, רועה (*ro'eh*), *the Shepherd, Stone of Israel*, indicating that *Shekhinah* (*Stone of Israel*, the brothers) *feeds* from *Yesod*.

See *Bahir* 133 (193); *Zohar* 1:146b, 230a, 231b, 246b. Genesis 49:24 reads in full: *Yet firm remained his bow, agile were his forearms—by the hands of the Champion of Jacob, from there, the Shepherd, Stone of Israel*.

82. **he guarded that covenant…** In rabbinic literature, Joseph is granted the title "righteous" in recognition of his having resisted the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife (called here Potiphera; see Genesis 41:45, 50). According to the *Zohar*, Joseph's sexual purity enabled him to scale the sefirotic ladder and attain the rung of *Yesod*, the divine phallus and site of the covenant. His refusal of Potiphar's wife signifies his resistance of Lilith, head of the female demons.

The act of circumcision serves to symbolically engrave the letter *yod*, first letter of the tetragrammaton upon the Jewish male's body, signifying his distinctive incarnation of Divinity on earth. Since the letter *yod* has the numerical value in *gimatriyyah* of ten, circumcision connotes the bodily symbol of all ten *sefirot*.

Kabbalistic literature, and the *Zohar* especially, conceptualizes sexual intercourse of Jewish males with Gentile females as an act of idolatry, which is formulated here as denying the heavenly body.

On Joseph's sexual continence, see Genesis 39; *Bereshit Rabbah* 93:7; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim*, 460; BT *Yoma* 35b. On the significance of circumcision, see Vol. 11, p. 671, n. 115. On denying or causing a defect in the divine body above, see Vol. 11, pp. 97–98, n. 202. On forbidden intercourse with Gentile women, see *Zohar* 1:93a, 131b, 189b; 2:3b, 7a, 57b, 60b–61a, 87b, 90a, 264a (*Heikh*); 3:13b–14a, 57b, 104b, 111a (*RM*), 142a (*IR*), 266a; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 212–13; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51–54 (63–67); David ben Judah he-Ḥasid, *Sefer Mar'ot Tsov'ot*, 222; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1365, 1370–71; Giller, *The Enlightened Will Shine*, 152, n. 102; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 56, 75, 81–82, 137–38, 139–40 n. 41, 168.

The full verse in Hosea 1 reads: *When YHVH first spoke through Hosea, YHVH said to Hosea, 'Go, take yourself a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by straying from YHVH*.' See *Zohar* 1:5a, 38b (*Heikh*), 148a (*ST*); 2:6a, 148b, 245a (*Heikh*); 3:231b; Moses de León, *Sefer Mishkan ha-Edut*, 48–49; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 356–61.

83. **How did he favor and sustain his brothers…** The author interprets the Biblical Hebrew term רעה (*ro'eh*), *shepherd* (or *tend*), as derived from the Aramaic רעי (*re'ei*), "favor, choose, delight, desire." Further, he associates the word שנה (*shanah*), *years*, from Genesis 37, with the same

term in Exodus 29 denoting the age of the daily offering of sheep, in order to deduce the medium of Joseph's "shepherding": the daily sacrifices. Thus those offerings in the Temple elicited the nourishment that was provided for *the brothers* (namely *Shekhinah*) by *Yesod*, signified by Joseph.

84. **revealing celestial secrets...** The *Zohar* joins Naḥmanides and other kabbalists in asserting that there were profound esoteric rationales for the sacrificial offerings. They decried Maimonides' earlier historical interpretation of the sacrifices—namely that God included them in the Torah only as a concession to the crude religious mentality of the Israelites who left Egypt.

On the meaning of the sacrifices, see *Bahir* 78 (109): "Why is sacrifice called קרבן (*qorban*)? Because it draws the holy powers close together." See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed*, 3:32; *Zohar* 1:239b, 248a; 2:86a, 108a; 3:4b–5b, 8a–b; *ZḤ* 64c (*ShS*); Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod* on *Shabbat* 28b (21a); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:878–90. Cf. Naḥmanides on Leviticus 1:9.

85. **inverted...** When the Temple stood, *Yesod* was joined to *Shekhinah*; but after its destruction, that flow of divine effluence, signified by נהר (*nahar*), "river," is debased. The author engages in wordplay, saying that now, heavenly supervision of the land comes only from נער (*na'ar*), "youth" (or "lad, boy"), which is a name for Metatron, the chief angel. This is considered an inversion because nourishment normally comes from *Yesod*, called *nahar*, which is located "above"—but now it comes from Metatron, called *na'ar*, who is "below." When the world is sustained by Metatron, the side of Judgment prevails.

The degradation of Joseph the *king* and virile *nahar* to Metatron the sterile *na'ar* not only signals the spiritual debasement of Divinity as represented in the world, but also reflects the situation of the *Zohar*'s medieval authors, who yearn for release from the oppression of Christian rule and a return to Jewish sovereignty.

On the verse from Ecclesiastes, see *Zohar* 1:95b, 124b–125a; 2:174b–175a. On Metatron as a youth, see Vol. 11, pp. 666–67, n. 105.

86. **exile with the people of Israel…** In rabbinic tradition, when Israel was sent into exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. Here, *Shekhinah*, who is represented by "Assembly of Israel," is joined by Righteous One, symbolizing *Yesod*. God provides for the people of Israel at this time by ensuring the welfare of the host nations, but it was the sins of the people of Israel that caused their degraded condition.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Do not look at me, for I am pitch-black, for the sun has scorched me. My mother's sons were incensed at me; they made me guardian of the vineyards—my own vineyard I did not guard*. Here, the verse is spoken by *Shekhinah*, who before going into exile protected and cultivated Israel (*my own vineyard*), while the other nations of the world were nourished from the drippings. But now, in exile Herself, *Shekhinah* keeps other nations (*the vineyards*), and Israel is nourished from the remnants.

On *Shekhinah* as going into exile with the Jewish people, see BT *Megillah* 29a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them. When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them. And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them." For more sources, see above, pp. 445, n. 5; 451, n. 17.

On the verse from Song of Songs, see *Zohar* 2:266a (*Heikh*); 3:45b, 119b, 209b; *ZḤ* 69d (*ShS*).

87. **אתנער (*itna'ar*), dissociated from, His supernal nature…** The author continues with the wordplay, contrasting the נהר (*nhr*), "river," that נהיר (*nahir*), "illuminates," and the נער (*na'ar*), "youth," in order to

illustrate Israel's and Divinity's debased state in exile; further alliteration comes with the word אתנער (*itna'ar*), "dissociates" (or "shakes off"). The verses from Isaiah and Jeremiah are interpreted to mean that when Righteous One and Assembly of Israel—signifying *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, respectively—are in exile, they have lost the flow of divine emanation from above.

The simple sense of the verse in Isaiah 57 is *The righteous one* אבד (*avad*), *perishes* [or: *is lost*]; but here, *avad* is construed as *loses*. See *Zohar* 1:55b, 67a, 182a–b, 196b; 2:9b, 11a, 57a–b; 3:16b, 69a, 150b, 266b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 229; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 29a; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 73.

The verse in Jeremiah reads: *Why has the land been ruined* [or: *lost*]? See *Zohar* 1:185a; 2:58a–b; 3:16b, 266b, 268a.

88. **bad report...** Joseph was punished because he slandered his brothers, and they were punished for abusing and then selling Joseph to the Arab traders.

Rabbinic tradition treats Esau typologically as representing the Roman Empire, which destroyed the second Temple and exiled the Jewish people.

Joseph's account to his father is discussed in *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:7: "Rabbi Me'ir said, '[Joseph told Jacob]: "Your sons are suspected of [eating] a limb [torn] from a living animal."' Rabbi Yehudah said, 'They are belittling the sons of the maidservants and calling them slaves.' Rabbi Shim'on said, 'They are casting their eyes upon the daughters of the land.'"

On the bad report brought by Joseph, see JT *Pe'ah* 11, 15d–16a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 86:1; 87:3; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 2, 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayeshev* 6; *Midrash Tehillim* 101:2; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Rashi, and Naḥmanides on Genesis 37:2; *Zohar* 1:182b; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Genesis 37:2, n. 35. On the question of whether Joseph's report was invented or not, see *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis

37:2; Ibn Ezra on Numbers 13:32. On the sin of Joseph's brothers (Genesis 37:27–28) as leading to the exile and destruction, see the following notes.

89. **ten who were slaughtered…** According to rabbinic tradition, the brothers' sin of selling Joseph was finally requited by the martyrdom of ten prominent rabbis at the hand of the Romans during the Hadrianic persecution in the second century. While Esau was the instrument for punishing Joseph at that time, in the Messianic era, as described by the prophet Obadiah (1:18), Joseph will destroy Esau: *The house of Jacob will be fire, the house of Joseph flame, and the house of Esau stubble, and they will set them on fire and consume them, and no survivor shall be left of the House of Esau…*

On the "Story of the Ten Martyrs," see below, note 183; Vol. 11, pp. 54–55, n. 79; 260–61, n. 681. On the ultimate destruction of Esau, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on 15:7; *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:5; *Bemidbar Rabbah, Naso* 11:1; *Devarim Rabbah* (Vilna) 1:20; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3 (beginning), 15:5; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12 (49b–50a); BT *Bava Batra* 123b; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 1; *Tsav* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayetse* 15; *Vayishlaḥ* 8; *Vayeshev* 4; *Tsav* 4; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* (Higger) 39; *Zohar* 1:143b, 173a; 2:120a; *ZḤ* 29d.

90. ***three transgressions…*** The verses in Amos are construed as referring to the sale of Joseph by his brothers. "Stripping off his cloak" alludes to the separation of *Shekhinah* from *Yesod*, symbolized by the "cloak" and Joseph, respectively. Alternatively, the "cloak" covers *Shekhinah* and represents the concealment of their union. See next note.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38: "[The brothers] sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver, and each one of them took two pieces of silver to purchase shoes for their feet, as is said:… *Because they have sold a righteous one for silver, and the needy for sandals*."

Skew renders יטו (*yatu*), literally *recline*. See below, note 92. On the midrashic treatment of Amos 2:6, see *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 2; *Midrash Asarah Harugei Malkhut*, p. 444; Musaf liturgy for Day of Atonement. Cf. BT *Yoma* 86b; *Zohar* 3:101a.

The full verse in Amos reads: *For three transgressions of Israel; for four, I will not reverse it; because they have sold a righteous one* [or: *those whose cause was just*] *for silver, and they have sold the needy for sandals*.

91. **cloak of comfort…** The transgressions signify the removal of the altar's covering, representing *Shekhinah*. Wine symbolizes the rich flow of emanation, but its dregs yield a bitter drink, which is identified with the *cup of wrath* and the *cup of poison* (or *of staggering*; *of reeling*) mentioned in Isaiah 51:17, 22.

"Comfort" renders פיוסא (*piyyusa*); alternatively, "consolation, pacification." Its usage here suggests intimacy and love, as well.

On the dual valence of wine, see *Zohar* 1:238b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 36–38 (43–44); Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 100; Hecker, *Mystical Bodies*, 214–15, n. 88; Vol. 11, p. 385, n. 90.

92. **preserved wine that they used to drink…** Israel's sins are represented as the idolatrous trading of one altar for another, resulting in the transmutation of "preserved wine" into a "cup of wrath." In rabbinic literature, a primordial vintage awaits the righteous in the world that is coming. In the *Zohar*, this wine symbolizes the rich emanation flowing from *Binah* and stored in the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*.

The verbal root נטי (*nty*) means "recline, diverge, skew, deviate." The author links the different scriptural uses of the verb to underscore the violation committed by Joseph's brothers—which damaged Israel's subsequent history below and the flow of blessings above. The invocation of

judgment leads to a broad application of judgment, beyond the target of one's initial hopes.

On the preserved wine, see BT *Berakhot* 34b; *Sanhedrin* 99a.

93. **All other transgressions…** Other transgressions associated with Amos 2:6 include the neglect of Torah study and commandments, sexual sins, Sabbath violation, and the avoidance of procreation.

See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 41; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 5; *ZḤ* 29d, 89b (*MhN, Rut*).

94. **Until those sins are dissolved…** Weeping elicits divine forgiveness. Obadiah 1:18 continues: *and the house of Esau* [*will be*] *stubble, and they will set them on fire and consume them, and no survivor will be left of the House of Esau*. Obadiah 1:21 concludes: *and the kingdom shall be YHVH's*. In the time to come, Jacob and Joseph, symbolizing *Tif'eret* and *Yesod*, respectively, will arrive at Mt. Zion, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. *Shekhinah* is known as *Malkhut* ("Kingdom"); and when Israel is redeemed, *The kingdom shall be YHVH's*—that is, She will be united with Her partner *Tif'eret* through *Yesod*.

In rabbinic literature, Esau often represents Rome; and in medieval Jewish literature, he often represents Christian rule. Thus, this teaching represents a veiled longing for the arrival of the messiah who will bring redemption for the Jewish people, and for the destruction of their Christian oppressors.

See JT *Avodah Zarah* 2:1, 40c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:14; *Tanḥuma, Terumah* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Terumah* 7; *Zohar* 1:172a; 3:7b, 77b.

95. **toppled from His post…** Oral Torah is personified and imagines the catastrophic possibility that God will abandon His people forever. Here, *Yesod* is depicted as the juncture between upper and lower worlds, in the event of God's departure.

96. **observe the Sabbath…** “The Sabbath” is of course the seventh day—thus corresponding to *Yesod* when counting seven *sefirot* from *Binah* (or alternatively, when joined together with *Shekhinah*). Since the supernal Sabbath had been violated through the selling of Joseph, representing *Yesod*, the sin can be rectified only through observance of the Sabbath.

See *ZḤ* 29c.

97. ***child of the elders…*** The author construes זקנים (*zequnim*), literally *old age*, as if it were written זקנים (*zeqenim*), *elders*—namely the *age-old mountains* (see above, note 75). The idiom *ba ba-yamim* is normally understood as “advanced in days; advanced in years,” but here it is interpreted hyperliterally: Abraham had initiated and entered the cosmic days, namely the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Shekhinah*. King David is identified with their summation and is described similarly.

On the hyperliteral reading of *ba ba-yamim*, see *Zohar* 1:103a, 126a (*MhN*), 129a–b, 142a, 224a; 3:170b.

98. **Joseph is more consummate…** Joseph is most exalted since he represents *Yesod*, the phallic organ of Divinity. In terms of the divine body, this puts him in the central position—with *Ḥokhmah, Ḥesed*, and *Netsaḥ* on his right, and *Binah, Gevurah*, and *Hod* on his left.

Usually in the *Zohar*, “ark of the covenant” symbolizes *Shekhinah* as the container that houses *Yesod*. Here, the unified male and female potencies are represented as one in the single image.

The full verse in Psalms (recording God’s promise to King David) reads: *His seed shall be forever, and his throne like the sun before Me*.

99. **garment for that Righteous One…** Apparently this “garment” is a spiritual medium that enables union between *Yesod* and *Matronita* (a name for *Shekhinah*). *Tsaddiq* and *Tsedeq* signify *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, respectively. On Sabbath eve, *Shekhinah* unites with *Tif’eret* to draw holy souls and

convey them below. Here the author returns to the theme of coupling and the recurrent esoteric meanings of the number seven.

See BT *Ketubbot* 62b: "When is the *onah* of the disciples of the wise? [i.e., What is the proper interval between two successive times of fulfilling this *mitsvah*?] Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shemu'el, 'From one Sabbath eve to the next.'"

On coupling on Sabbath eve, see *Zohar* 1:14a–b, 50a, 112a (*MhN*); 2:63b, 89a–b, 136a–b, 204b–205a; 3:49b, 78a, 82a, 143a (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 120; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1232–33, 1357; Wolfson, "Eunuchs Who Keep the Sabbath."

100. **Moses…** He is likewise connected with the "Mystery of Seven," through his mystical ascent to *Netsaḥ* and thereby with *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by *the well*. The "supernal priest" with seven descendants may signify *Binah*, who has seven *sefirot* below Her; or it may refer to *Ḥesed*, who is often called "priest" and is the initiator of the lower seven *sefirot*. The biblical text identifies the figure as *priest of Midian* rather than by name as Jethro to indicate that the referent is one of the *sefirot*—and not simply Jethro, Moses' future father-in-law.

The verse in Exodus concludes: *and they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock*.

101. ***sent… to the right—Moses…*** In this hyperliteral reading of the Hebrew sequencing in the verse, there are two divine arms—right and left—called *the right* and *arm*, respectively. They each are positioned in relation to Moses, which raises the question whether he is aligned with the right or left side of Divinity. The text explains that Moses is associated with the side of Judgment because of his levitical descent, but his rung is that of *Tif'eret*. This dual affiliation is proven through kabbalistic interpretation of a string of verses that link compassion and judgment through

associations of Torah with fire, strength, and judgment. This demonstrates that *Tif'eret*, Moses' rung, encompasses both right and left.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: מוליך לימין משה זרוע תפארתו (*Molikh li-ymin Moshe zero'a tif'arto*), *Who sent the arm of His beauty* [or: *His beautiful arm*] *to be at Moses' right* [or: *right hand*], *splitting the waters before them to make Himself an everlasting name*. See BT *Berakhot* 6a; *Zohar* 3:34b, 142b (*IR*), 269a, 283b; Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 60–61.

102. **Torah blends Compassion and Judgment…** The Torah, like Moses who delivered it, blends right and left sides. The Torah is a harmonious blend of left and right, Compassion and Judgment. The verse in Deuteronomy implies this by mentioning both the divine *right hand* and a *fiery law* (fire symbolizing *Gevurah*, which is located on the left).

See *Zohar* 1:198a, 243a; 2:27a, 81a, 84a–b, 90b, 135a, 166b, 206b, 223a; 3:176a. The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *YHVH from Sinai came and He shone from Seir upon them; He radiated from Mount Paran and He arrived from myriads of holy ones; from His right hand, a fiery law for them*.

On Torah as strength (based on the verse in Psalms), see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:2; 19:16; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 343; BT *Zevaḥim* 116a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4; 2:3; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:4; 21:2; *Zohar* 1:240a; 2:58b, 94a; 3:269a.

103. **curses of Leviticus…** In BT *Megillah* 31b, Abbaye distinguishes between the list of curses in Leviticus 26 and the later list in Deuteronomy 28: "The former [curses] are stated in the plural [i.e., addressed to all Israel] and Moses uttered them מפי הגבורה (*mi-pi ha-gevurah*), from the mouth of [Divine] Power [i.e., conveying God's speech]; the latter are stated in the singular and Moses uttered them מפי עצמו (*mi-pi atsmo*), from his own mouth [i.e., in his own formulation and in his own name]." For example, the list in Leviticus reads: *If you* [plural] *do not heed Me* (Leviticus 26:14), conveying divine speech, whereas the list in Deuteronomy reads: *It*

shall be, if you [singular] *do not heed the voice of YHVH your God*… (Deuteronomy 28:15).

Gevurah in Abayye's statement is conventionally construed as "Power," but here the Zoharic author interprets it as a reference to the *sefirah* of *Gevurah* (Judgment), on the left side, source of curses. The author reconciles the apparent contradiction of Moses' combining right and left sides by claiming that Moses manifests *arm of His beauty*, from the left, whereas his sefirotic rung is *Netsaḥ*, on the right side.

On the passage in *Megillah*, see *Zohar* 3:7a, 115a, 261a, 265a. On the distinction between the two sets of curses, see Naḥmanides on Leviticus 26:16; *ZḤ* 59c–60a. On the phrase *mi-pi ha-gevurah*, "from the mouth of Power [or: the Almighty]," see Vol. 4, p. 439, n. 262; Vol. 7, pp. 27–28, n. 86.

104. **a left that is the right…** "Right" and "left" here reflect relative, rather than absolute, status. Since the priestly caste normally signifies the side of *Ḥesed*, it is surprising that Aaron represents the lower left side (the left thigh) in his union with Hod. Moses is only a Levite and thus expected to be on the left; but in his role as *god* to Aaron, he aligns himself with *Netsaḥ* (right thigh) and assumes the status of the right side in relation to Aaron.

The simple meaning of this verse is that Moses will deliver oracular messages to Aaron, who will then communicate them to the nation. The word *god* renders אלהים (*elohim*), which in biblical Hebrew can also refer (by metonymy) to representatives of the divine, such as angelic beings and human rulers and judges.

On the exchange of left and right, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 343: *"At his right hand was a fiery law unto them* (Deuteronomy 33:2). When an Utterance proceeded from the mouth of the blessed Holy One, it would emerge from the blessed Holy One's right hand—to the left of Israel—and sweep around the encampment of Israel a distance of

twelve *mil* by twelve *mil*, before returning, via the right of Israel, to the blessed Holy One's left. And the blessed Holy One received it in His right hand, engraving it on the stone tablet."

105. ***priest of Midian…*** The identity of this priest has perplexed ancient and modern commentators. In Exodus 2:18, the girls' father is identified as Reuel, which means "friend of God." Numbers 10:29 refers to *Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law*, but the syntax is ambiguous; it is unclear whether Moses' wife is supposed to be the daughter of Hobab or of Reuel. Elsewhere, Jethro is called *priest of Midian* (see Exodus 3:1; 18:1) and *Jether* (ibid. 4:18). Rabbinic tradition asserts that these are all names for the same person. Modern scholarship suggests that the term יתרו (*Yitro*)—which is traditionally construed as the name Jethro—is actually an honorific, meaning "His Excellency." In Akkadian, *atru* means "preeminent, foremost."

Here this verse continues the homily's motifs of betrothals at the well, and of the number seven.

On the multiplicity of names for the *priest of Midian*, see Judges 4:11; *Mekhilta, Yitro* 1; *Sifrei*, Numbers 78; Ibn Ezra (long), Rashbam, and Sarna, *Exodus*, on Exodus 2:18; Rashi on ibid. 18:1. The diverse names apparently reflect different ancient traditions.

106. **as we have established** See above, note 100.

107. **seven royal crowns…** The verse in Chronicles reads: *Yours, O YHVH, are* הגדולה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד (*ha-gedullah ve-ha-gevurah ve-ha-tif'eret ve-ha-netsaḥ ve-ha-hod*), *the greatness and the power and the beauty and the victory and the splendor—yes, all that is in heaven and on earth*. Quoted often in kabbalistic literature, this biblical list of divine qualities designates *Ḥesed* (also called *Gedullah*), *Gevurah, Tif'eret, Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod* (known as *All*), and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *earth*), who is joined with *Tif'eret* (*heaven*)—

seven patriarchs signify these seven *sefirot*. See above, note 35.

108. **righteous ones drew from the supernal spring…** The human righteous draw spiritual sustenance from the well, signifying *Shekhinah*, and then they convey the divine overflow to the rest of the world. This is represented also by Abraham, signifying *Ḥesed*, who runs to provide nourishment for the angels who visit him, as described in Genesis 18. The *Zohar* engages in wordplay, suggesting an equivalence between the Hebrew רהטים (*rehatim*), "troughs (or channels)," from which Jethro's daughters draw water, and *Targum Onqelos*'s translation of the verb וירץ (*va-yarats*), *and he ran*, which is ורהט (*ve-rahat*)—thus yielding that Abraham "channeled" divine overflow.

See Genesis 30:38, 41; Exodus 2:16 (and Rashi, ad loc.); Song of Songs 7:6.

109. **Why is all this necessary?…** The ultimate purpose of the entire structure of divine overflow is for the sake of Israel, which is God's *flock*.

Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai was the first to apply the designation *human* to Israel exclusively. See BT *Yevamot* 60b–61a: "*You, My flock—flock of My pasture—are human* [*and I am Your God*] (Ezekiel 34:31). You are called *human*; Gentiles are not called *human*."

See BT *Bava Metsi'a* 114b, *Karetot* 6b; *Tosafot* on *Yevamot* 61a, s.v. *ve-ein ha-ovdei kokhavim*; on *Bava Qamma* 38a, s.v. *ela adam*; on *Sanhedrin* 59a, s.v. *ela ha-adam*; *Zohar* 1:20b; 2:25b (*Piq*), 86a; 3:173a, 219a; *ZḤ* 37b (*RR*), 78c (*MhN, Rut*); Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 42–57. Cf. M *Avot* 3:14; BT *Avodah Zarah* 3a.

The citation from Ezekiel appears to be slightly conflated with Ezekiel 34:17.

110. **the other nations…** These are typical lines of interpretation in rabbinic literature. First, biblical references to oppression invariably refer to the persecution that Israel suffers at the hands of "the other nations."

Second, Torah, rather than Moses, is the key to salvation on both national and individual scales.

The verse in Exodus concludes: *and watered their flock*. The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *Many shepherds have destroyed My vineyard, have trampled My field, have made My delightful field a desolate wilderness*.

111. **When Israel returned repentantly…** The penitence of the people of Israel and its results are reflected in the biblical text—the blessed Holy One responds by shifting from the Throne of Judgment to the Throne of Compassion. This transformation is alluded to by the change of moniker for Jethro: first he is called *priest of* מדין (*Midian*), *Midian*, which is revocalized here as *mi-din*, "from judgment"; afterward he is referred to as רעואל (*Re'uel*), *beloved of God* (or *friend of God*). The *Zohar* offers an Aramaic folk etymology for the latter name, building upon the root רעי (*r'y*), "delight in; choose; desire."

In rabbinic literature, Jethro is treated as a penitent—having served as an idolatrous priest before turning to the God of Israel. See *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32: "Why was he called Reuel? Because he had become a friend of God."

On Jethro as Midianite priest and "friend of God," see *Sifrei*, Numbers 78; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 11; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32; Rashi on Exodus 2:16; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah* on Exodus 2:16, nn. 133–35. On Jethro's various names, see above, note 105.

"Repentantly" renders תיובתא (*tiuvta*), "refutation, contradiction, repentance." The reading in T1 may say תיאובתא (*teiuvta*), "yearningly," but the scribe appears to have crossed out the additional letter. Cf. Meroz, "R. Yosef Angelet," 379.

112. **that old man…** Jethro asks his daughters a question with coded kabbalistic symbolism ("with heavenly wisdom"): What prompted the search for היום (*ha-yom*), referring to *Ḥesed*?

According to the simple meaning of the verse, Jethro is surprised by the speed with which they were able to water the flocks that day.

"To return yearningly" renders דתהדרון בתיאובתא (*de-tehadrun be-tei'uvta*), "to return with ardor, longingly." Normally one would expect דתהדרון בתיובתא (*de-tehadrun be-teyuvta*), "to return repentantly; do *teshuvah*," and the author of this section plays on the similar pronunciation of these two adverbs.

Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32 [8].

113. **והאיש (*ve-ha-ish*), *And the man*...** The text here is somewhat obscure. The term *ish, man*, generally signifies *Tif'eret*, and it is joined here with the article ה (*he*), *the*—which is also the fourth letter of the tetragrammaton—representing *Shekhinah*. Moses is the human manifestation of *Tif'eret* and it is in his capacity as husband of *Shekhinah* that the Israelites are freed from Egypt.

On Moses' relationship with *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 488, n. 122; Vol. 6, pp. 103–4, n. 128; below, note 466.

Exodus 2:19 reads in full: *They said, 'An Egyptian man rescued us from the hands of the shepherds, and also he drew water for us and watered the flock.'* Cf. *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 11; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32 [9]; *Zohar* 1:6b; 2:14a.

114. **מצרי (*mitsri*), Egyptian...** The term *mitsri* is interpreted based on the root צור (*tsur*), "besiege, oppress." When the Jewish people neglect the Torah, they experience oppression; when they return to pious behavior, they receive abundant blessing—as represented by the emphatic *also he drew, drew water for us*.

115. ***also he* דלה דלה (*dalloh dalah*), *drew, drew*...** In an unvocalized biblical text, the two verb forms look alike, which enables the author to interpret the apparent doubling as symbolic of the two supernal sources from which Moses draws influence: *Gevurah* and *Netsaḥ*. The latter is Moses' own rung, providing blessing. This may be intended to explain the contrasting interpretations of *the*

Egyptian—one who oppresses Jethro's daughters and another, Moses, who saves them from the shepherds' abuse.

The phrase "from the mouth of the Almighty" renders the common rabbinic phrase מפי הגבורה (*mi-pi ha-Gevurah*). The author is playing on the second meaning of *Gevurah* as the *sefirah* that exemplifies God's power and force.

Cf. BT *Megillah* 31b (quoted above, note 103).

116. **daughters and sons…** See *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 16: "It is written: *The priest of Midian had seven daughters* (Exodus 2:16). Perhaps he had sons, but his daughters were shepherds? Rather, he did not have any sons; but once Moses entered his home he was blessed with sons, as is written: *The sons of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law.*" Here, the author interprets the terms *daughters* and *sons* as markers of increasing status, privileging the male—as is the norm in Kabbalah. When in exile, Jethro's offspring (signifying the Israelites) are called *daughters*; but once they have entered the land of Israel they are called *sons*, as indicated by the understanding of עלו (*alu*), *ascended* (or *went up*), as a reference to spiritual ascent.

On Jethro's children, see Exodus 18:5; *Zohar* 2:69b. The verse in Judges reads: *The children* [or: *the sons*] *of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up from the City of Palms with the children of Judah to the desert of Judah, which lies in the Negeb* [or: *south*] *of Arad, and they went and dwelt with the people* [Septuagint reads: *the Amalekites*].

117. **the blessed Holy One has chosen them…** This flourish should be understood in its historical context. The message communicated consistently to the Jews in Christian Spain was that God had abandoned them and created a new covenant with those who were part of the Christian Church. Following upon the salvific biblical example of Jethro's descendants going into the land of Israel, the author here asserts that God's covenant with the Jewish people is eternal, and that they were required to fulfill their side of the pact through commitment to Torah, in

order to see their status restored in the Messianic era, heralded by the coming of Elijah.

On the Torah as apotropaic for Israel in exile, see, e.g., BT *Sotah* 21a. Malachi 3:23 concludes: *before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of YHVH*.

118. ***Moses took* עצמות (*atsmot*), *the bones*...** Joseph, at his death, had made his brothers promise to eventually take his bones out of Egypt (Genesis 50:25), a promise fulfilled by Moses at the Exodus. Joseph's bones were reinterred in Canaan at the end of the conquest (Joshua 24:32). Through wordplay, the word עצמות (*atsmot*), *bones*, is reinterpreted as *atsmut*, "essence." Since the essential legacy of Moses to the people of Israel was Torah, that is the esoteric meaning of Joseph's *bones*—that Joseph's essence was Torah. Moses, symbolizing *Tif'eret*, can unite with *Shekhinah*, often signified by Oral Torah, only by means of Written Torah, which is symbolized here by Joseph, who stands more specifically for *Yesod*.

Cf. *Zohar* 3:236a (*RM*).

119. **Aaron appeared...** Aaron signifies the *sefirah* of *Hod*, which lies between *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized here by *Kavod*. As with the patriarchs above, Aaron unites with *Shekhinah* through the Mystery of Seven, as indicated by his marriage to אלישבע (*Elisheva*), who is understood here as *My God of Seven*. In Zoharic Kabbalah, the two statues of cherubim that are poised above the ark (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) of the covenant (symbolizing *Yesod*) symbolize *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, who are also represented by Moses and Aaron. According to Exodus 28:22, God will speak from between those two cherubim—just as here, Moses and Aaron are the ones who transmit the Torah.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother*, לכבוד (*le-khavod*), *for glory*, ולתפארת (*u-ltif'aret*), *and for splendor*.

120. **Moses' עצמו (*atsmo*), own self...** Just as Torah is conveyed through Joseph's essence (see above, note 118),

so too is it conveyed by Moses' essence, linked to the *sefirah* of *Netsaḥ*. In order to teach this lesson, the author revisits here the rabbinic teaching (quoted above, note 103) regarding the different sources of Scripture's curses.

121. **Mystery of Seven…** David also bonds with *Shekhinah*—called Mystery of Seven. His unification is represented by his seven-year reign in Hebron, and through his marriage to בת שבע (*Bat Sheva*), "Daughter of Seven." Bathsheba's association with *Shekhinah* is strengthened by the etymology of her father's name, אליעם (*Eliam*), "God of the nation." The *Zohar* here explains that God gave His "Daughter"—signifying *Shekhinah* (also called Assembly of Israel)—to the people.

On David joining the patriarchs, see *Zohar* 1:99a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 12, 67.

122. **Right side…** The following section (ending at note 125) appears in the main body of both T1 and P2 in a parallel column with the scribal notation "another version." It does not have a similar version in Angelet, *Quppat ha-Rokhelin*. See Meroz, "R. Yosef Angelet," 381–82.

123. **a daughter whose name was *ba-kol*…** According to a rabbinic tradition, the verse *YHVH blessed Abraham* בכל (*ba-kol*), *with everything*, alludes to Abraham's being blessed with a daughter whose name was *Ba-Kol, With Everything*. In Kabbalah, this daughter is identified with the divine daughter, *Shekhinah*. God knew that Abraham and his descendants would *guard* (or: *keep*) *Shekhinah*, symbolized by *the way of YHVH*.

On *ba-kol*, see BT *Bava Batra* 16b, 141a; *Bahir* 52 (78); Naḥmanides on Genesis 24:1; *Zohar* 1:219a; 2:36a; *ZḤ* 10d, 25a (both *MhN*).

The full verse in Genesis reads: *For I have known him* [or: *singled him out*], *so that he will instruct his children and his household after him: they will guard* [or: *keep*] *the way of YHVH to do righteousness and justice*.

124. **This rung is called *guard*…** In the Ten Commandments, the entry that pertains to the Sabbath is recorded in two versions; *Shekhinah* is identified with the operative verb *Guard* [or: *Keep*] in the version found in Deuteronomy, whereas *Tif'eret* is symbolized by the parallel verb *Remember* (Exodus 20:8). The same term *guard* is used in the verse from Genesis cited in the previous paragraph regarding Abraham's descendants and ethical behavior—indicating that righteousness protects *Shekhinah* from assault by the *Sitra Aḥra*.

On *Shekhinah* as the "betrothed one," see *Bahir* 137 (196): "When a person studies Torah for its own sake, the Torah is joined to the blessed Holy One.... What is this Torah? It is the Bride who is adorned and crowned, and comprised within all the commandments. She is Treasury of the Torah and the betrothed of the blessed Holy One, as is written: *Torah did Moses command us, a heritage for the assembly of Jacob* (Deuteronomy 33:4). Do not read *heritage* (*morashah*), but rather *betrothed* (*me'orasah*); and do not read *betrothed*, but rather *heritage*. How is this so? When the people of Israel ply Torah for its own sake, then She is the betrothed of the blessed Holy One; and when She is the betrothed of the blessed Holy One, then She is the heritage of Israel." Cf. BT *Berakhot* 57a.

On protection from the uncircumcised and impure, see Isaiah 52:1. On foreskin as the paradigmatic symbol for Gentiles, see ibid.: *For the uncircumcised and the impure will enter you no more*. See Exodus 6:12; 1 Samuel 17:26, 36; 2 Samuel 1:20; Jeremiah 6:10; 9:25; Ezekiel 44:9; M *Nedarim* 3:11; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29; Ibn Ezra, "Introduction," *Commentary on the Torah* (long); Eleazar of Worms, *Sodei Razayya*, 145; *Zohar* 1:13a, 47a, 95a–b, 98b (*ST*), 103b, 172b; 2:244b, 255b (*Heikh*); 3:72b–73a; *ZḤ* 66b, 67a, 69d, 72a, 72d (all *ShS*), 79b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 45–46; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 131–32; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 33–34, 57, 109; idem,

Sheqel ha-Qodesh, 55 (67–68); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 50b–51a; Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 17:1; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1678–80; Cohen, *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised?*, 94–98; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, index, s.v. "foreskin."

125. ***David's practice…*** King David represents *Shekhinah*, and since he protected Her (symbolized by "celestial path"), the army was successful; and so *Shekhinah* brought victory to Israel in its wars.

The context in Samuel (2 Samuel 8:15–16) reads: *David reigned over all Israel, and David administered justice and equity to all his people. And Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army, and Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder*.

126. **Uriah before David…** Both Bathsheba and the land of Israel needed refinement before they were joined with their fitting partners. Though Bathsheba was destined to be the wife of King David, he took her prematurely; and as a result, his dynasty did not rule forever. Restoration of harmony between heaven and earth is indicated by Solomon's unification with *Shekhinah*, as represented by his sitting *on the throne as king*.

On the similarity of Bathsheba and the land of Israel, see *Zohar* 1:73b, 83a, 91b, 229a; 2:101a; 3:78b, 283b–284a. On earthly and heavenly kingship, see BT *Berakhot* 58a, in the name of Rabbi Sheila (when he was addressing the Persian king): "Blessed is the Merciful One, who grants kingdom on earth that is patterned after the kingdom in heaven, and granted you dominion and the love of justice."

"Unripe fruit" renders פגה (*pagah*); alternatively, "undeveloped berry, fig, date," etc. See *Tosefta Shabbat* 16:10; JT *Pesaḥim* 2:5, 29b; *Kil'ayim* 1:9, 27b; Jastrow. On King David's eating "unripe fruit," see BT *Sanhedrin* 107a.

The prophet Nathan declared to King David that his dynasty would last forever (2 Samuel 7:16), but that divine promise appears in the biblical text prior to the episode about David's adulterous abuse of power.

127. **In the days of King Solomon…** Then *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) ruled in all Her glory. According to the Midrash, just as the moon does not become full until the fifteenth day of its cycle, so it remained incomplete until the glorious reign of Solomon.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26: "When Solomon appeared, the disk of the moon became full." See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:12; *Zohar* 1:223a; 2:11a, 29a; 3:40b, 46a, 97b (*Piq*), 181b, 287a; *ZḤ* 83b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 24, 47. On the idealization of the generation of Solomon, see Vol. 11, p. 346, n. 2.

On David's sin, repentance, and the rise of King Solomon, cf. *Zohar* 2:106b–107b; Vol. 5, pp. 121–26, nn. 354–55. On the "days of King Solomon," see *Zohar* 1:73b–74a, 150a, 223a–b, 225b, 238a, 243a, 249b–250a; 2:85a, 143a, 144b–145a, 149a, 242a; 3:61a, 74b, 181b, 297a; *ZḤ* 37d, 83b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 149; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 22–23 (26–27); Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 93–99.

128. **all those ten** The union of Solomon and the *Shekhinah* completes the unification of all of the lower seven *sefirot* with Her, establishing the oneness of Divinity.

129. **Tree of Life…** Torah is often identified as the Tree of Life, based on the description of Wisdom in Proverbs 3:18: *A tree of life is she to those who grasp her, and those who hold her are deemed happy*. This verse describes Wisdom, which is traditionally identified with Torah. Through Torah study, one not only attains wisdom, but mystically cleaves to the divine name.

On Torah as Tree of Life, see *Avot* 6:7; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 15:25; BT *Berakhot* 32b; *Zohar* 1:152b, 168a, 174b, 193a; 3:53b, 148b, 260a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 330. On Wisdom as a stand-in for Torah, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:1.

On Torah as the name of God, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 548; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 37; *Zohar* 2:55b, 60a–b, 87a–b, 90b, 124a, 161b; 3:13b, 19a, 21a, 35b–36a, 61a, 71a–73a, 76a, 80b, 89b, 98b, 159a, 176a, 265b, 298b; *ZḤ* 75c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 341–42; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 37–44; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1085–86; Idel, "Tefisat ha-Torah"; Wolfson, "The Glorious Name and the Incarnate Torah." Cf. Naḥmanides, introduction to *Commentary on the Torah*, 6–7; idem, "Torat ha-Shem Temimah," in *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:167–68.

In rabbinic literature, an otherwise unspecified reference to "Rabbi" refers to Rabbi Yehudah the Prince, who flourished in the early third century. He is seldom quoted in the *Zohar*, though he is quoted frequently in *Midrash ha-Ne'lam*.

130. **more than any of his brothers...** Written Torah and Jacob both signify *Tif'eret*. Of Jacob's children, only Joseph merited to symbolize one of the *sefirot*, specifically *Yesod*. Here the closeness of that relationship is expressed in terms of Joseph's dedication to Torah; further, he seeks to attain טוב (*tov*), "goodness," signifying his rung, which is *Yesod*. To reward him, the blessed Holy One bestowed upon Joseph the gift of dream interpretation.

On Jacob transmitting Torah to Joseph, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:8 (and Theodor's notes there), in the name of Rabbi Neḥemiah: "[*Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons*] means that all the laws that Shem and Eber had handed down to Jacob, he transmitted to [Joseph]." Rabbi Neḥemiah interprets the words בן זקנים (*ben zequnim*), *child of old age*, as בן זקנים (*ben zeqenim*), *child of elders*, alluding to Shem and Eber.

On dreams as a form of prophecy, see BT *Berakhot* 57b; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:36; *Zohar* 1:149a (*ST*), 149a–b, 183a, 191b, 196a, 238a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 369; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 126. In the

book of Daniel (8:16; 9:21–22), Gabriel interprets revelations. See *Zohar* 149a (*ST*), 149b, 183a, 196a; 2:247b–248a (*Heikh*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 126. On dreams as a lower form of divine communication, see BT *Ḥagigah* 5b. On the quality of dreams, see *Zohar* 1:130a–b, 150b, 183a, 199b–200a, 238a; 2:264a (*Heikh*); 3:25a; Moses de León, *Sefer Mishkan ha-Edut*, 6; Wolfson, *A Dream Interpreted Within a Dream*, 162–69, 255–57; Yisraeli, *Pitḥei Heikhal*, 247–55.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, for he was the child of his old age, and he made him an ornamented tunic*.

131. **has dream-vision… when he is בחלימותא (*be-ḥalimuta*), hale…** On the wordplay *ḥeilma-ḥalimuta* that links dreaming with health, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 19:5, in the name of Rabbi Abbahu: "Six things—each of which is a good portent for a sick person—namely sneezing, sweating, sleep, seminal emission, dreaming, and regular bowel movement.…Proof that dreaming is a good sign? [*My Lord, by these things people live, and they are all the life of my spirit*.] *You did cause me to dream and make me to live* (Isaiah 38:16)."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:10; BT *Berakhot* 55a, 57b; cf. Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 40:9.

132. ***binding sheaves…*** The verse in Genesis reads: *Look, we were* מאלמים אלומים (*me'allemim alummim*), *binding sheaves, in the field, and look, my sheaf arose and actually stood up, and look, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf!* Joseph's superiority is confirmed through the kabbalistic interpretation of a halakhic principle, along with wordplay between it and the verse. The principle "כל דאלים (*kol de-alim*), whoever is stronger, prevails," is educed in a rabbinic discussion regarding field irrigation rights in which the debate remains unresolved. The Talmud leaves the matter in the hands of the disputants, with the expectation that whoever has a

stronger claim, or is simply more powerful, will prevail. The word *kol* (as well as Joseph) signifies *Yesod*, and the rabbinic term *alim*, "stronger," is linked to the term *alummim, sheaves* (and is playing on the similar sounding *ḥeilma*, "a dream," and *ḥalimuta*, "hale," of the previous paragraph). The *Zohar* concludes that the dream represents a divine confirmation of Joseph's status and of Jacob's favorable treatment toward him. The site of the brother's contention is the *field*, symbolizing *Shekhinah*.

See BT *Gittin* 60b, *Bava Batra* 34b.

133. **a rung higher than the rest...** *Shekhinah* is represented as the *name of YHVH*; She is also symbolized as a *tower of strength* inhabited by *Yesod*, who is known as Righteous One. When Joseph's sheaf is erect, it supports *Shekhinah* (signified by Assembly of Israel and by the final *he* of the tetragrammaton). She is encompassed by, united with, and suckles from *Yesod*; this reading is reinforced by the conclusion of the verse from Proverbs 18, which reads in full: *The name of YHVH is a tower of strength; the righteous one runs into it and is secure*.

134. **All twelve tribes... stand beneath the Sea of Lower *Ḥokhmah*...** The Sea of Lower *Ḥokhmah*, "Wisdom," symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who presides over twelve legions in the angelic realm above the twelve tribes below. Here the twelve tribes are represented by twelve bronze oxen that support the large bronze reservoir built by Solomon in the Temple (*the sea of cast metal*), with three oxen facing outward in each direction. *Yesod* channels all divine overflow —symbolized by *the streams*, originating in *Ḥokhmah* above, called Upper Beginning—into *Shekhinah*. This paragraph emphasizes that the flow is induced by the union of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah* that occurs first below. The *Zohar* bases its reading here on the sequence of Hebrew terms in the verse כל הנחלים הולכים אל הים (*kol ha-neḥalim holekhim el ha-yam*), *all the streams flow into the sea*—the word *kol*, representing *Yesod*,

precedes mention of the "streams," signifying the other *sefirot*, in their procession into *the sea*, symbolizing *Shekhinah*.

On the *sea* that stood in the Temple, see *Zohar* 1:154a, 241a, 246a; 2:164b; above, pp. 487–88, n. 121.

135. **encircling the Dwelling...** The book of Numbers describes a plan for the encampment of the Israelite forces—each tribe constituting a military unit with its own banner. The formation is a protective square, meant to ward off potential assaults from all directions, with the Tent of Meeting inside the square. Numbers 2:2 reads in full: *Every man by his banner* [or: *Each household with its standard*], *with insignia for their father's house, shall the Children of Israel camp; at a distance, around the Tent of Meeting, they shall camp. The Tent of Meeting* (representing *Shekhinah*) is surrounded by the twelve tribes in the desert encampment.

No tribe is named after Joseph—his place being taken by his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (see Genesis 48:5–6). Numbers 2:18–19 read: *The banner of the camp of Ephraim by their divisions to the west... And by him the camp of Manasseh*. Joseph alone has attained union with the *Shekhinah*; the exclusion of his name as a tribal grouping indicates his superior status among the brothers. See *Zohar* 1:200a, 246b; *ZḤ* 46b; Moses de León, "Commentary on the Ten Sefirot," 366a.

136. **mystery of your supernal rung...** In each of these verses the apparent redundancy is explained as a reference to the relationships of Joseph and his brothers in this world, and of their symbolic correlates (*Yesod* and angelic legions) in the celestial realm. *Yesod* channels all nourishment to the world through *Shekhinah*, signified here by the phrase בעתו (*be-ito*), which is construed not according to its simple meaning as *in its proper time*, but rather as *in his proper time*—that is, the "time" belonging to *Yesod*, namely *Shekhinah*. Alternatively, it can be interpreted as בעת ו (*be-et vav*), *in the time of vav—the time* represents *Shekhinah* in

relation to *vav*, whose numerical value is six, symbolizing the six central *sefirot*, whose flow funnels through *Yesod*.

On the term עת (*et*) as a symbol for *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:116b, 194a; 2:155b; 3:58a; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 29a.

Genesis 37:8 reads in full: *His brothers said to him, 'Will you really reign over us? Will you really rule us?' And they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words*. Genesis 42:6 reads in full: *Joseph was the governor over the land; he was the provider to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him, their faces to the ground*.

137. **they were jealous of him** On the brothers' jealousy, see *Zohar* 1:182b–183b.

138. **What is the meaning of *et*?...** This is actually a double question. First, what is the significance of the word את (*et*)? Second, why according to the Masoretic text are both its letters dotted?

Regarding the first query, את (*et*) is technically an accusative particle with no ascertainable independent sense. Yet already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, as often in the *Zohar*, the amplification of את (*et*) connotes *Shekhinah*, who comprises the entire alphabet of divine speech, from א (*alef*) to ת (*tav*).

As for the Masoretic tradition of dotting certain letters in the Torah, it is indeed a laconic scribal practice that invites midrashic treatment. Here Rabbi Yehudah explains that the dots over the word את (*et*) highlight and reinforce the kabbalistic amplification of that same word, namely *Shekhinah*.

On the meaning of the particle *et*, see BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Zohar* 1:15b, 29b, 53b, 60a, 112b, 120b, 164b, 247a; 2:81b, 82b, 90a, 126a, 135b, 178b (*SdTs*); *ZḤ* 66a (*ShS*), 91c (*MhN, Eikhah*). Cf. the Christian parallel in Revelation 1:8: "I am *alpha* and *omega*."

On the verse in Genesis, cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:13 (and Theodor's note); *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 34; Rashi; *Zohar* 1:183b. On dotted letters in the Torah, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 69; BT *Bava Metsi'a* 87a; *Soferim* 6:3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 34; B, 37.

The verse continues: *Look, I dreamed another dream, and, look, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me!*

139. **to be embellished among them…** Jacob, called here "old man," apparently did not recognize the enmity that the brothers bore toward Joseph; he naively thought that they were studying Torah piously. In that context he expected that Joseph would benefit from their company.

140. **Gabriel found him…** The scriptural context (Genesis 37:15–17) reads: *A man found him and, look, he was wandering in the field. The man asked him, 'What are you seeking?' He said, 'I am seeking my brothers. Tell me, please, where are they pasturing?' The man said, 'They left this* [or idiomatically: *moved on from here*], *for I heard them say, "Let us go to Dothan."' And Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan*. Based simply on verbal analogy, the anonymous figure designated as הא׳ש (*ha-ish*) in this verse is identified as Gabriel, who is conspicuously given the title *ha-ish, the agent* [*of God*], in Daniel 9:21.

On Joseph's interlocutor's identity as an angel, or as Gabriel in particular, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 37:15; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 2; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38; Rashi on Genesis 37:15; *Zohar* 1:184a; 2:11a, 19a (*MhN*).

The brothers had aligned themselves with sinfulness, perhaps the same crimes that Joseph had originally reported to his father. Joseph followed them away from "the field," signifying *Shekhinah*, thus departing from Her protection. Joseph hoped to inspire them to repentance, and to return to Torah and adhesion to "the field."

Rashi comments on the vague phrase *They moved on from here*: "They removed themselves from brotherhood."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:14, p. 1017, variants, lines 3ff.

"To bring them back… with ardor" renders בתיאובתא לאתבותהון (*le-atbuthon be-tei'uvta*). The similar version in Angelet, *Quppat ha-Rokhelin*, reads: לאתבותהון בתיובתא (*le-atbuthon be-ti'uvta*), "to return them in repentance." See Meroz, "R. Yosef Angelet," 389, n. 88.

141. ***Dothan*—a place of Hard Judgment…** This interpretation derives from Rashi's speculative etymology (Genesis 37:17) that the word *Dothan* refers to נכלי דתות (*nikhlei datot*), "conspiratorial proceedings."

On Dothan as a place of corrupt juridical proceedings, see Rashi on *Sotah* 13b, s.v. *mi-Shekhem genavuhu*: "Dothan is not a place…. This is what [the man] said to him: 'You say, "*I am seeking my brothers* (Genesis 37:16)." Flee this brotherhood, since they do not act as brothers toward you. I heard them saying, "Let's contrive proceedings and judgments to have him executed if he approaches us."'" See *Bereshit Rabbah* 97:8 (on Genesis 49:8, pp. 1216–17); 99:7; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, ad loc., n. 121; cf. Meroz, "R. Yosef Angelet," 389.

142. **A poor person is considered dead…** See BT *Avodah Zarah* 5a, in the name of Mar: "Four are considered dead: a poor person, a blind person, a leper [or: one afflicted with scales], and one who is childless. This is as is written: *For* כל (*kol*), *all, the men are dead* [*who were seeking your life*] (Exodus 4:19). To whom does this refer? Dathan and Abiram." Here Rabbi engages in wordplay with the name Dathan (alluding to the justmentioned *Dothan*), as well as with the word ויתנכלו (*va-yitnakkelu*), *and they conspired*. Since *va-yitnakkelu* contains within it the word כל (*kol*), "All," the verb is interpreted to mean an excision of "All"—which refers to Joseph's supernal rung and source of life.

On the four types who are considered dead, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 71:6; *Eikhah Rabbah* on 3:6; BT *Nedarim*

64b; *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 5:4; Rashi on Exodus 4:19.

The phrases in square brackets have been added from the parallel in Angelet's *Quppat ha-Rokhelin* (169b), since they are illegible in T1. See Meroz, "R. Yosef Angelet," 390.

143. **Then [Simeon] and Levi [were aroused]…** Genesis 37:19–20 reads: *They said, a man to his brother, "Here comes that dream-master! Come now, let's kill him and fling him into one of the pits, and we'll say, 'A vicious beast devoured him.' We'll see what comes of his dreams."* The verses do not specify which brothers hatched the plan, but midrashic tradition assigns the role to Simeon and Levi. Their violent temper is evident in an earlier episode, described in Genesis 34 when their sister Dinah was disgraced, these two brothers avenged the outrage by killing the perpetrator and all the men of his town. Here, Rabbi explains that both brothers derived from the *sefirah* of *Din* (Harsh Judgment).

Simeon and Levi wanted to detach Joseph from his union with *well of living waters*, representing *Shekhinah*, and send him to a pit, bereft of living waters. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:16: *"They took him and threw him into the pit, and the pit was empty, there was no water in it* (Genesis 37:24). Water was not in it; snakes and scorpions were." Here, Rabbi interprets the pit as a symbol of Gentile impurity.

On Simeon and Levi as the murderous brothers, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 97:8 (on Genesis 49:8, pp. 1216–17); 99:7; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 37:19; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayeshev* 13; *Zohar* 1:172b–173a, 184a, 185b, 198b, 200b, 236a; 2:6a, 11a.

On the pit, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 37:24; BT *Shabbat* 22a, *Ḥagigah* 3a; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 2; Rashi on Genesis 37:24.

144. **tunic of פיוסים (*piyyusim*), consolation…** When Joseph is mystically unified with *Shekhinah* (symbolized by

“Matronita” and “Assembly of Israel”), he is garbed in a כתנת פיוסים (*ketonet piyyusim*), “tunic of consolation”—a term that plays on his כתנת פסים (*ketonet passim*), *ornamented tunic*.

On Joseph and consolation, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 93:9. The full verse reads: *It happened when Joseph came to his brothers that they stripped Joseph of his tunic—the ornamented tunic that he had on him*.

145. ***They slaughtered a goat…*** The word שעיר (*sa’ir*) means “goat, demon, satyr” and also “hairy.” In Genesis 27:11, Esau is described as איש שעיר (*ish sa’ir*), *a hairy man*; and Esau and his descendants inhabited the land of שעיר (*se’ir*), *Seir* (see Genesis 32:4; 36:8–9). Moreover, Esau represents the demonic realm, while the slaughter of a goat signifies an invitation to the realm of impurity. Both Moon and Temple symbolize *Shekhinah*, who is now defiled as a result of that slaughter.

On the demonic significance of the goat, see above, note 5. The context in Genesis (37:31–32) reads: *They took Joseph’s tunic and slaughtered a goat and dipped the tunic in the blood. They sent the ornamented tunic and had it brought to their father, and they said, “We found this. Recognize, please: is it your son’s tunic or not?”*

146. **no overflow of *Ḥesed*…** *Ḥesed* is represented by water, but now that Joseph has been removed from the stream of divine blessing, he is in a pit without water. The resultant blockage enables the “snakes and scorpions”—representing the other nations—to send the Jewish people into exile. The paragraph concludes with a rebuke to the Jewish people living after the destruction of the Temple, linking their sinful behavior to that of the brothers.

On the pit of snakes and scorpions, see above, note 143.

147. ***Midianite merchantmen…*** Rabbi plays on both terms here. The written word מדינים (*midyanim*) can be vocalized as *mi-dinim*, meaning *of judgments*, which is then interpreted here as coming from the side of Judgment. (In rabbinic literature, Midianite women become a

paradigmatic symbol for Israel's sexual transgressions, because of the episode in Numbers 25:1–9.) The words rendered as "merchant" and "surrounding" have the same root, סחר (*sḥr*), and indeed those terms may be semantically related, inasmuch as merchants may try to surround a customer with wares, or they wander around while seeking business. Here, that presumed etymological relationship heightens the fearsomeness of the forces of judgment.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *Midianite merchantmen passed by and pulled Joseph up out of the pit and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver, and they brought Joseph to Egypt*. The simple meaning of the verse in Proverbs reads: *Dwelling in the corner of a roof is better than with a contentious wife in an common house* [or: *alehouse*].

148. **place of governance of the other nations…** Egypt is the original and paradigmatic site of exile. The verse from Psalms demonstrates the blessed Holy One's commitment to Joseph—whose rung is *Yesod*, which is also called *good* and called *All*.

149. **[*ZḤ* 27b]** A scribal notation in the manuscripts at this point reads: "Missing here." From here on, the printed editions of *Zohar Ḥadash* on *parashat Vayeshev* resume, continuing with the theme of the patriarchs. See above, note 40.

150. **Corresponding to those seven righteous ones…** There are seven festivals in the Jewish calendar for which an additional Musaf offering was commanded. These are the Sabbath, New Moon, Passover, Shavu'ot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot. These correspond to the following biblical figures and their respective sefirotic rungs: Joseph (*Yesod*), David (*Shekhinah*), Abraham (*Ḥesed*), Jacob (*Tif'eret*), Isaac (*Gevurah*), Moses (*Netsaḥ*), and Aaron (*Hod*), respectively. "Fathers" presumably refers to *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, while "sons" refers to *Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod*, and *Shekhinah*.

The holiday that follows Sukkot, namely Shemini Atseret, is omitted apparently because of the need for a symbolic referent for the number seven (not eight), and from the sense—based on its very name—that it is a conclusion of the Sukkot holiday, rather than a holiday on its own. On the correspondence of offerings to different biblical figures, cf. *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tsav* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:18. For various sefirotic associations with the holidays, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1238–40.

151. **the Sabbath…** *Yesod*, who is also known as the Righteous One, is called *Kol*, "All," because He collects the entire flow of emanation and conveys it to *Shekhinah*. On the Sabbath, that divine overflow derives originally from Hidden Mind (or Concealed Brain), which is another name for *Keter*. The flow from *Keter* all the way down to *Yesod* indicates the preeminence of the Sabbath.

On the Sabbath as corresponding to *Yesod*, see *Bahir* 123–24 (180); Naḥmanides on Exodus 31:13; *Zohar* 2:92a; *ZḤ* 8b, 30a, 32a, 44b, 62b (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar* 3:1223–26. On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, notes 30, 75. On *Yesod* as כל (*kol*), "All," see above, note 48.

152. **New Moon…** The New Moon signifies *Shekhinah*, who is also called "Assembly of Israel."

153. **fifteenth day of the first month…** This is Passover, which begins on the fifteenth of Nisan. See *ZḤ* 43a; cf. *Zohar* 1:226b, where Passover symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

154. **convocation in the third month…** This refers to Shavu'ot, which, along with *the voice of Jacob*, signifies *Tif'eret*. The seven-week interval between Passover and Shavu'ot is signified here by "seven voices."

On Shavu'ot as symbolizing *Tif'eret* (also represented by Jacob), see *Zohar* 1:226b; 3:96b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 336.

155. **Rosh Hashanah…** According to rabbinic tradition, Sarah conceived Isaac on Rosh Hashanah. The

classic Torah reading for the two days of the holiday describes the conception, birth, and binding of Isaac (Genesis 21–22).

On Isaac and Rosh Hashanah, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 73:1; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 10b–11a; *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 17; *Zohar* 1:37a, 103a, 226b; 3:18a, 99a–100a, 99b–100a (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 45a. Cf. *Zohar* 2:44a. On the binding of Isaac, see *Zohar* 1:119b. On the tradition that Isaac was bound on Rosh Hashanah, see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* (per Munich MS, printed in *Neveh Shalom*, ed. Taussig, 51); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40, 171b; *Midrash Aggadah* on Genesis 22:14; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:252, n. 248. Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:9; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40, 169b.

156. **Yom Kippur…** After the sin of the Golden Calf, Moses interceded with God on behalf of Israel, and God was propitiated. According to rabbinic tradition, that day was Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, upon which sins of the repentant are forgiven. Moses began to prepare the second set of stone tablets on that day as well.

On Moses' prayer and God's forgiveness, see BT *Berakhot* 32a: "Rabbi El'azar said, '… As soon as He said, *Release Me, that I may destroy them* (Deuteronomy 9:14), Moses said, "This matter depends on me!" Immediately he stood and emboldened himself in prayer and pleaded for mercy….' *Now, leave Me be, that My wrath may blaze against them and I may consume them, and I will make you a great nation*. Rabbi Abbahu said, 'If the verse were not written, it would be impossible to say! This teaches that Moses grasped the blessed Holy One like a man grasping his friend by the garment, and said before Him, "Master of the Universe! I will not leave You alone until You pardon and forgive them!"'"

See Exodus 32:11–14, 31–32; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 27; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:15; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 4, p. 17; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 22; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'etḥannan*, add. 1; *Shemot Rabbah* 42:9; 44:10; Rashi on Exodus 32:10;

Deuteronomy 3:24; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; *Zohar* 1:67b, 106a; 2:190b; 3:15a; *ZḤ* 15a, 23a (both *MhN*).

On Yom Kippur and the second tablets, see Exodus 34:1–4; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 31; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; Rashi on Exodus 18:13; 33:11; *Ta'anit* 30b, s.v. *she-nittenu boluḥot aḥaronot*; *Tosafot* on *Bava Batra* 82a, s.v. *kedei she-lo yalinu*; *Zohar* 1:261a (*Hash*); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 1:138–40; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah, Ki Tissa*, pp. 147–48, n. 239.

157. **Sukkot—corresponding to Aaron…** See BT *Ta'anit* 9a, in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Yehudah: "Three fine patrons arose for Israel, namely Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; and through them were given three fine presents, namely the well [that miraculously accompanied Israel through the desert], the cloud [of glory shielding them], and manna. The well, by the merit of Miriam; the pillar of cloud, by the merit of Aaron; manna, by the merit of Moses…. When Miriam died, the well disappeared…. When Aaron died, the clouds of glory disappeared…."

See *Tosefta Sotah* 11:1, 8; *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:35; *Sifrei*, Numbers 82; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 305; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 34:8; JT *Yoma* 1:1, 38b; *Sotah* 1:9, 17c; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 21:1; Deuteronomy 10:6; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 9–10; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:56; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 1:21; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:6; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 3a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:5; *Tanḥuma, Bemidbar* 2; *Ḥuqqat* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bemidbar* 2; *Ḥuqqat* 42; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 25; *Midrash Mishlei* 14:1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 1:2; 13:20; 19:20; *Zohar* 2:190b; 3:102b, 283b; *ZḤ* 14d (*MhN*). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 62:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 19:2.

158. **[29a]** The material translated below is titled "*Sitrei Torah* from *parashat Vayeshev*" in the printed editions, but it does not conform to the style of *Sitrei Torah*. Moreover, it contains the fragmentary material that is printed on the upper portion of *Zohar Ḥadash* 29a, where it is simply entitled *Zohar* on *parashat Vayeshev*. It does not

appear in Salonika (1597), appearing for the first time in Venice (1658). A variant from the fragment at the top of *Zohar Ḥadash* 29a is translated below in note 180.

159. **When a person draws near to Torah…** Through study of the Torah—which is called "good"—one becomes righteous and attains mystical union with *Shekhinah*, who is also called *Tsedeq*, "Justice." *Shekhinah*'s mate, the phallic member *Yesod* (called *Tsaddiq*, "Righteous One"), is symbolized by the term טוב (*tov*), "Good"; and a righteous person in this world can also attain that rung. A person's dedication to Torah study redounds in both personal moral enhancement and the revelation of supernal secrets of Torah.

Psalms 73:28 reads in full: *As for me, nearness to God is good; I have made Adonai YHVH my refuge, that I may recount all Your works*. Psalms 119:72 reads in full: *Good for me is the Torah of Your mouth* [or: *I prefer teaching You proclaimed*] *above thousands of gold and silver pieces*.

160. **six supernal days…** The *Zohar* hyperliterally interprets *For in six days YHVH made heaven and earth* (Exodus 31:17)—given the lack of the expected preposition ב (*be*), *in*, before *six days*—thereby turning the *six days* into the object of *YHVH*'s creative power. Thus, the *six days*—usually alluding to the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*—were themselves fashioned, or emanated; and now they serve as the structure of the divine reality. Here *Yesod* is counted as the seventh day, which is when He is regularly in conjunction with *Shekhinah*. Alternatively, the count may include the four *sefirot*—*Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*—who constitute the upper chariot, along with *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, leaving *Yesod* as the seventh.

Yesod, also called *Kol*, "All," gazes upward toward "Brain," representing the most hidden recesses of Divinity—*Keter*—and then receives divine overflow. This bounteous overflow proceeds downward through the *sefirot*, ultimately pouring into *Shekhinah*—who is called *Kallah*, "Bride"—in the form of

divine seminal fluid, and then as nourishment for worlds below.

The simple meaning of the verse in Psalms is *You give them their food in its time*, i.e., the appropriate time; here, the author interprets the word עת (*et*), *time*, as a symbol for *Shekhinah*. Thus, *his time* signifies the "time" (partner) belonging to *Yesod*, just as the relation of *Kol* and *Kallah* represents the intimate relationship of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*.

On the sefirotic interpretation of Exodus 31:17, see above, note 41. On *Yesod* as the seventh (a frequent association in this later stratum of the *Zohar*), see Naḥmanides on Exodus 31:13; *Zohar* 2:92a; *ZḤ* 8b, 27b, 30a, 32a (*TZ*), 44c, 62a (*ShS*); *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 2.

161. **Will of Wills, descending from Concealed Brain to this *Kol*...** Divine blessing flows from *Keter* down to *Yesod*, which are signified by Will of Wills and *Kol*, respectively, and then onto the realms below. The author construes the verses atomistically, as a chain of terms signifying these divine and created entities. Thus in the phrase *YHVH is near* לכל (*le-khol*), *to all, who call Him, YHVH* represents *Tif'eret* while *khol* represents *Yesod*, and *who call Him* represents the worlds below.

The context in Psalms (145:16–19) reads: *Opening Your hand and sating to their pleasure all living things. Righteous is YHVH in all His ways and magnanimous in all His deeds. YHVH is near to all who call Him, to all who call Him in truth. He performs the will of those who fear Him, and their outcry He hears, and rescues them*.

162. **Just as He created the supernal world...** The theme of "as above, so below" is a cardinal principle of Kabbalah. It is applied here: as there are six *sefirot* above (*Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret, Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Malkhut*), so too are there six righteous ones below (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, and David). *Yesod* is the seventh, expressed by Joseph below.

See above, note 57.

163. **When sins incited…** When the brothers sold Joseph, God proclaimed that Joseph would fulfill the same role below that Righteous One—*Yesod*—does above. Joseph's fruitfulness, as indicated in Jacob's blessing in the verse from Genesis, refers to his success in procuring nourishment in Egypt during the famine. *Yesod* is the link of upper *sefirot* to *Shekhinah*, and Joseph mirrors that role in Egypt by conveying food from above (Pharaoh's storehouses) to the people below.

The full verse in Amos reads: *For three transgressions of Israel; for four, I will not reverse it; because they have sold a righteous one for silver, those whose cause was just, and they have sold the needy for sandals*.

164. **Just as the עין (*ayin*), source, of the eyeball…** The root עין (*ʿyn*) can be read as *ayin*, meaning "eye"; alternatively, "source," or in construct form as *ein*, "essence of." The author playfully draws on these different connotations, suggesting that just as the pupil or sclera of the eye is the central feature of the eyeball, so was Joseph the essential *sefirah*. The six who surround him are *Ḥesed* through *Hod*, plus *Shekhinah*.

On the seven righteous ones, see above, note 42. On the three on the right and on the left, see *Bahir* 105 (157, 159).

165. **to bless all the other days…** The Sabbath is the source of blessing for all the other days of the week. Here the intent was that *Yesod* bring blessing to all of the seven lower *sefirot*.

See *Bahir* 105 (159); *Zohar* 2:63b, 88a. The full verse in Exodus reads: *For* [*in*] *six days YHVH made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in it; and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore YHVH blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it*.

166. **You profaned the Sabbath…** By selling Joseph, the brothers transgressed the Sabbath, which is associated with him. As this homily progresses, it develops a historiographical explanation of God's commandment of the

Sabbath as a rectification of the brothers' sin, and of subsequent violations of the Sabbath as the causes of the destruction of the two Temples.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1224–25.

167. **Twenty-two years…** Rabbinic tradition teaches in the name of Rabbi Levi (BT *Berakhot* 55b) that twenty-two years elapsed between the first dream recounted by Joseph to his brothers (Genesis 37:7) and the dream's fulfillment (see Genesis 42:6). Joseph's brothers and their descendants were punished tenfold for the number of years that they exiled Joseph from his father and homeland. Since death serves as atonement, according to rabbinic teaching, the *Zohar* here accounts for the discrepancy between this calculation and the two hundred and ten years that the Israelites were actually in Egypt by deducting one year in exchange for the demise of each of the guilty brothers. The numerical value in *gimatriyyah* of the term רדו (*redu*), *Go down*, is 210—an esoteric allusion to the impending punishment.

On the numerical value of *redu*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 91:2 (in the name of Rabbi Abba bar Kahana); *Tanḥuma, Miqqets* 8; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:20. On the chronology, see *Seder Olam Rabbah* 3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 48; Rashi on Genesis 15:13; Rashbam on *Bava Batra*, s.v. *asher yaledah*; Sarna, *Genesis*, 116. The full verse in Genesis reads: *He said, 'Look, I have heard that there are provisions in Egypt. Go down there, and get us provisions from there—that we may live and not die*.' On the deaths of the brothers as atonement for the sale of Joseph, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38 (and Luria's notes 89–90).

Brief fragments of this passage (through 29d) are published in *ZḤ* 29a under the title *Zohar*. The one significant variant from those texts appears below, note 180. See also Liebes, "Keitsad Nitḥabber Sefer ha-Zohar," 64–65, n. 293; Meroz, "R. Yosef Angelet," 306.

168. **Who is *Kol*?…** *Yesod* is the link between upper and lower *sefirot* in the celestial realm above, and Joseph is the

human correlate below. The brothers will be able to procure food only from the very person whom they had sold; and it was through his sale that the demonic Other Side was aroused, causing the famine and their misfortune. Joseph represents the seventh *sefirah* and thus provides redemption during the seven years of famine.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38.

169. **lower world arrayed like the world above...** As in the world above, where *Yesod* provides divine overflow for *Shekhinah*, so too the righteous one on earth—Joseph—is the provider of food. "Recipient" renders the word שביר (*shavir*), designating Joseph as the proof that food would be provided for the people in Egypt. The speaker interprets the verse to mean that the *eyes of Kol*, namely *Joseph*, look to the blessed Holy One in hope of receiving nourishment; thereafter Joseph becomes the משביר (*mashbir*), "provider."

The full verse in Genesis reads: *Joseph was the governor over the land; he was the provider to all the people of the land*.

The verse in Psalms concludes: *You give them their food* בעתו (*be-itto*), *in His time*. On this interpretation of the verse, see above, note 136.

170. **Joseph is called כל (*Kol*), All...** *Kol* is doubled here in the name Khalkol, which appears in 1 Kings 5:11: *Solomon was wiser than all men, than Ethan the Ezrahite and Heman and Khalkol and Darda*....

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 39: "[Joseph] supported the land in the famine of bread, therefore he was called by the name Khalkol. And Khalkol is Joseph, as is said: ויכלכל יוסף (*va-yekhalkel*), *Joseph sustained*." The verse in Genesis reads: *From there*, רועה (*ro'eh*), *the Shepherd, Stone of Israel*. But the speaker interprets *ro'eh* as a participle meaning "feeds, grazes," and takes the verse to mean that *Shekhinah* (*Stone of Israel*) *feeds* from *Yesod*.

On Khalkol, see above, note 48. On the verse from Genesis, see *Bahir* 133 (193); *Zohar* 1:146b, 231b, 246b.

171. **famine in the world on account of the sin…** According to rabbinic teaching, suffering comes to the world (often in multiples of seven) when righteous ones depart. Jacob mitigated the punishing decree through prayer, but he had influence only over the five *sefirot* that were at or below his rung (*Tif'eret, Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod, Shekhinah*); he had no impact on the remaining two above (*Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*).

See *Tosefta Sotah* 10:1–9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38; Rashi on Genesis 47:19.

172. **Joseph… acted similarly…** Joseph selected five of his brothers to present to Pharaoh as an attempt to reduce the duration of the famine by five years. As above, these five represented the five *sefirot* over which he—as an extension of his father Jacob—had influence. The "rupture" that the brothers caused is the breach between *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*.

The *Zohar* adds Benjamin to the four sons of the concubines, to reach a total of five brothers who did not hate him. See *Targum Yerushalmi* on Genesis 47:2. This verse reads in full: *From the pick of* [or: *From among all*] *his brothers he took five men and presented them to* [or: *before*] *Pharaoh*.

173. ***before* פרעה (*par'oh*), *Pharaoh*…** The speaker engages in wordplay to associate the title פרעה (*par'oh*), "Pharaoh," with the verb פרע (*pr'*), "to exact justice." The six brothers who had acted against Joseph apparently lost their share in the world that is coming.

174. **How can Israel leave the exile?…** Divine Judgment plays the role of prosecutor, questioning the apparently early release of the Israelites from Egypt. According to Him, the punishment should have extended seven times as long, in fulfillment of the threat in Leviticus 26:18—presumably for a total of seven times the 210 years already spent in exile.

The blessed Holy One contends that when the Jewish people observe the Sabbath, they facilitate the union between *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*—represented by Joseph and Shabbat, respectively—thus procuring atonement for their transgressions. He cites this observance as the reason for the reduced sentence that Judgment has just questioned.

On punishment "sevenfold," see Leviticus 26:18: *If even with these you do not heed Me, I will go on to chastise you sevenfold for your sins*. See ibid., 24, 28; Rashi on Leviticus 26:15; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 26:16; cf. Genesis 4:15, 24. On the calculation of appropriate punishment, see Ḥayyim Yosef David Azulai, *Devash le-Fi*, 31b.

According to rabbinic tradition, Torah antedated the world by two thousand years. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:2; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 19:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:24; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Midrash Shemu'el* 5:2; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 16; *Midrash Tehillim* 25:8; 90:12, 17; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:164; *Bahir* 4 (5), 37 (55); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 3–4, 77; *Zohar* 2:49a, 84b, 99a; 3:128a (*IR*), 159a; *ZḤ* 5a (*MhN*), 29c, 49b, 88c (*MhN, Rut*).

On Shabbat as a gift, see BT *Shabbat* 10b: "Rav said, 'One who gives a gift to another must inform him that he is giving it to him, as is said: [*YHVH said to Moses, 'And you, speak to the Children of Israel, saying: Yet My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you for your generations*], *to know that I am YHVH, who sanctifies you*' (Exodus 31:13).' That was also taught in a *baraita*: *For I am YHVH, who sanctifies you*—the blessed Holy One said to Moses, 'I have a good gift in My treasure house, and Shabbat is its name; and I seek to give it to Israel. Go inform them.'"

175. ***YHVH showed him a tree…*** The Torah is the ideal apotropaic to combat demonic forces, depicted as mighty, raging waters.

The notion of Torah as a remedy is apparently derived from Exodus 15:25–26. The simple sense of those verses reads: *He cried out to YHVH, and YHVH showed him a tree; and he threw it into the water, and the water turned sweet. There He* שם (*sam*), *set, for him statute and law; and there He tested him. He said, 'If you really heed the voice of YHVH your God, and do what is right in His eyes, and hearken to His commands and keep all His statutes, all the sickness that I imposed upon Egypt I will not impose upon you, for I am YHVH your healer.'* Here, the author may be reading the end of verse 25 as follows: *There*, שם (*sam*), *a remedy, for him—statute and law—and there He tested him*.

Torah is identified elsewhere with the Tree of Life, based on the description of wisdom in Proverbs (especially 3:18). On Torah as *tree* and Tree of Life, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 47; BT *Berakhot* 32b, *Arakhin* 15b; *Zohar* 1:152b, 168a, 174b, 193a; 3:53b, 260a; *ZḤ* 47c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 330.

On the *tree* in Exodus 15:25 as Torah, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:25; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beshallaḥ* 18. On the *tree* in Exodus 15:25 as the Tree of Life, see *Bahir* 107 (161); *Yalqut ha-Makhiri*, Proverbs 3:18; *ZḤ* 82a (*MhN, Rut*); Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 15:25, n. 261*.

176. **commandment at Marah…** According to rabbinic tradition (based on Exodus 15:25: *There He set for him statute and law*), certain commandments were enjoined upon the Israelites at Marah, before the revelation at Sinai.

On Sabbath observance as eliciting divine compassion, see *Qohelet Rabbah* on 11:2: "*Give a portion to seven and even to eight*, [*for you know not what evil will be on earth*] (Ecclesiastes 11:2). Rabbi Eliezer says: *Give a portion to seven*—these are the seven days of the week, as is said: *And it happened on the seventh* [*day*] (I Kings 18:44). *Even to eight*—eight days of circumcision, as is written: *And put his face between his knees* (ibid., 42). Why *between his knees*?

He said before the blessed Holy One, 'Master of the Universe, even if Your children possess only these two commandments—Sabbath and circumcision—it is fitting that You have compassion upon them.'"

On the commandment to observe the Sabbath as being issued at Marah, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 15:25; JT *Beitsah* 2:1, 61a; BT *Shabbat* 87b, *Sanhedrin* 56b; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 5; *Leqaḥ Tov* on Deuteronomy 5:12; *Midrash Aggadah* on Deuteronomy 5:15; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Rashi on Exodus 15:22; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:32. On redemption following the observance of two Sabbaths, see BT *Shabbat* 118b (in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai); *ZḤ* 30a; cf. *ZḤ* 33d (*Tiq*).

177. **Come and see what happened when sins incited...** When the Israelites violated the Sabbath in the days of Jeremiah, the prophet cautioned them not to carry burdens (or not to conduct business) on the Sabbath. The author here playfully reinterprets the warning to mean that they should not bring their sinful behavior within the confines of *Shekhinah*, called "Gates of Righteousness," for She is the abode of the heavenly Sabbath, representing *Yesod*. Their relationship is pithily rendered by the similarity of their symbolic names—*Kallah* and *Kol*, "Bride" and "All," representing *Shekhinah* and *Yesod*.

178. **strengthened by the earthly kingdom...** Human behavior in this realm has direct impact above. Through observing God's law, King David's kingdom is strengthened, which fortifies *Shekhinah* (also called *Malkhut*, "Kingdom") above. David alluded to the adhesion of the two realms by referring to *mamlekhah, kingdom*—written with two *mem*s, rather than the simpler term *melukhah, kingdom*. Profanation of the Sabbath, however, leads to the rending of these two, and thus to the destruction of Jerusalem below.

On the verse in Chronicles, see above, note 35. The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *But if you do not obey My command to hallow the Sabbath day and to carry in no burdens through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will set fire to its gates; it shall consume the fortresses of Jerusalem and it shall not be extinguished*.

179. **they did not safeguard the holy covenant…** When the Jewish people violate the covenant, symbolizing *Yesod*, they break the union of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*; this prompts *Shekhinah*, who is represented by the *sword*, to take vengeance upon them. They sinned against the covenant in three ways: selling Joseph the "righteous one"; committing sexual transgressions, as alluded to by the verse from Jeremiah; and transgressing the Sabbath, which is also identified with *Yesod*.

The Sabbath is associated with *Yesod* because, like circumcision, it too is called a *sign* (Exodus 31:13); and secondly, on account of the kabbalistic interpretation of the first version of the Ten Commandments, which reads: זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Exodus 20:8). According to Kabbalah, *zakhor* alludes to זכר (*zakhar*), "male," thus signifying the male divine potency, namely the *sefirah Yesod*.

On *Shekhinah* as sword, see *Zohar* 1:66b, 165a (*ST*), 238b; 2:26a, 28b, 54a, 61a, 66a; 3:19b, 30b, 52b, 73b–74a (*Mat*); *ZḤ* 122b (*Mat*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 69, 213. On the association of Sabbath, circumcision, and the righteous one, see *Aggadat Bereshit* 17; Naḥmanides on Exodus 31:13; *Zohar* 2:92a; *ZḤ* 8a, 27b, 29b, 30a, 32a, 33d, 44c, 62a (*ShS*); *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 2. On the verse in Jeremiah, see BT *Menaḥot* 53b. The full verse in Amos is quoted above, note 90.

180. **seventy years…** A variant from *ZḤ* 29a explains the significance of the different periods: "Then they began their enslavement, sevenfold for their sin. The seventy-year exile in Babylon was decreed against them for their

violations of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years that are suspended from the Great Sabbath and the regular Sabbath. Afterward, they came to the Holy Land, dwelling there for four hundred and twenty years to compensate for seventy Sabbaticals. Seventy years—ten years for each day that suckles from the seventh. For the Great Sabbath is also called seventh, [counting] upward from below, comprising *Remember* and *Guard* as one."

According to the Bible, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow, and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). After seven Sabbaticals comes the Jubilee—proclaimed every fifty years—when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus 25:8–55).

The Sabbatical year and regular Sabbath both symbolize *Shekhinah*, while Jubilee years and the Great Sabbath both represent *Binah*. Through the transgression of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, the *sefirot* themselves are tarnished. The Israelites were punished with 70 years of exile, corresponding to the 70 Sabbatical years that they neglected, as indicated in 2 Chronicles 36:20–21 (and Rashi, ad loc.): *Those who survived the sword he exiled to Babylon, and they became his and his sons' servants till the rise of the Persian kingdom, in fulfillment of the word of YHVH spoken by Jeremiah, until the land paid back its Sabbaths; as long as it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, till seventy years were completed*. The subsequent 420 years during which they dwelt in the land of Israel completes the total of the 70 seven-year cycles. The punishment of 70 years of exile consisted of 10 years for each of the lower 7 *sefirot*—who receive divine overflow from *Binah*, who in turn is signified by the "seventh" and "Great Sabbath."

Remember and *Guard* are the two verbs used regarding the Sabbath in the different versions of the Decalogue. זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember*, in the first version

(Exodus 20:8) represents the masculine aspect of Divinity (see previous note). The second version reads: שמור (*Shamor*), *Guard, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Deuteronomy 5:12), in which the alternative formulation, *Shamor*, signifies the divine female, *Shekhinah*. According to rabbinic tradition the two were spoken simultaneously, constituting a unity.

On the number of years between first and second Temples, cf. BT *Avodah Zarah* 9a. On the expression "sevenfold for their sin," see above, note 174. On exile as a punishment for transgression of the Sabbatical year, see Leviticus 26:33–34: *I will scatter you among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation, and your towns a ruin. Then shall the land expiate its Sabbath years all the days that it is desolate while you are in the land of your enemies; then shall the land keep a Sabbath and expiate its Sabbath years*. See Rashi; Ibn Ezra; Levine, *Leviticus*; Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*; Alter, *Five Books of Moses*; M *Avot* 5:9. On the Great Sabbath, see *Zohar* 2:204a. On *remember* and *observe* as male and female, see Vol. 11, p. 191, n. 471. On *remember* and *observe* as being spoken simultaneously, see ibid.

181. **the sin of wanton hatred incited…** Baseless hatred is a perennial impulse with ancient roots; after 420 virtuous years it aroused again, leading to the destruction of the second Temple. In rabbinic literature, Esau symbolizes Rome; in medieval Jewish literature, he also stands for Christians, under whom the Jews often suffered. As a mark of measure-for-measure justice, the Jews who harbored wanton hatred—reaching back mythically to the brothers' hatred of Joseph—were punished by people who held similar enmity.

See BT *Yoma* 9b: "During the Second Temple period, people were occupied with Torah, commandments, and acts of kindness—why was the Second Temple destroyed? On account of the wanton hatred during that period. This comes to teach you that wanton hatred is equal to the three

severe transgressions: idol worship, forbidden sexual relations, and bloodshed."

The verse from Ezekiel reads in MT: *delivered the Children of Israel over to the sword*. On discrepancies between Zoharic citations of Scripture and MT, see above, pp. 365–66, n. 136.

182. **number of years that were missing…** The author begins a calculation of the ultimate redemption, based on the assumed number of years of required exile to compensate for Joseph's kidnap and sale. Since Joseph was prevented from seeing his father for 22 years, that number is multiplied by 10 (corresponding to the 10 brothers) and then by 7 (in accordance with the verse from Leviticus and corresponding to the lower *sefirot*); the product is 1,540.

A similar text in Angelet's *Quppat ha-Rokhelin* (154a) reads: "Subtract the 280 years that they were exiled in Egypt and Babylon, and 1,260 years remain." According to his subsequent calculation in *Livnat ha-Sappir* (57c–d), the year of redemption would be 1328, conceivably within Angelet's own lifetime. For a different approach to the calculations, see *Or Yaqar*, 13:218–19.

183. **thirty years of the righteous one's ascent…** Joseph attains his full power as the viceroy of Egypt at the age of thirty, a number symbolizing the three uppermost *sefirot*: *Keter*, *Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*. At that point, Joseph, representing *Yesod*, was able to funnel blessing to the people from the highest levels within Divinity. That quality of dispersal of divine blessing will be renewed when the Messianic era arrives and Israel's enemies are annihilated.

According to rabbinic tradition, the brothers' sin of selling Joseph was finally requited by the martyrdom of ten prominent rabbis at the hand of the Romans during the Hadrianic persecution in the second century.

See *Midrash Mishlei* 1:13, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi, and the further statement attributed there to Rabbi Avin, according to which ten martyrs in each

generation suffer on account of the brothers' misdeed, "and still that sin lingers."

See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §108; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:13; *Midrash Elleh Ezkerah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:64–72); *Ma'aseh Asarah Harugei Malkhut* (in ibid. 6:19–35); *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*), 106a, 202a; 2:8b, 33a; *ZḤ* 46a, 76d, 89c (last two *MhN, Rut*), 93b (*MhN, Eikhah*); Musaf Yom Kippur Liturgy; Stern, *Rabbinic Fantasies*, 143–65; Reeg, *Die Geschichte von den Zehn Märtyrern*; Boustan, *From Martyr to Mystic*, especially 51–60, 71–98; Meroz, "R. Yosef Angelet," 329–33.

The verse in Obadiah continues: *and the house of Esau* [*will be*] *stubble, and they will set them on fire and consume them, and no survivor shall be left of the House of Esau*.

184. **the seventeenth of Tammuz…** Rabbinic tradition relates that a series of calamities occurred on the seventeenth of Tammuz and the ninth of Av. See M *Ta'anit* 4:6: "Five events occurred to our forefathers on the seventeenth of Tammuz and five on the ninth of Av. On the seventeenth of Tammuz the tablets were broken; the daily offering ceased; the city [walls of Jerusalem] were breached; Apostemos burned a Torah scroll; and [Manasseh] placed an idol in the Sanctuary. On the Ninth of Av it was decreed upon our ancestors that they would not enter the land; the Temple was destroyed the first time and the second time; Beitar was captured; and the city [of Jerusalem] was plowed."

The phrase "weeping… for generations" derives from a midrashic interpretation of the verse describing how the people wept when they heard the slanderous report of the scouts: *The whole community lifted their voice and put it forth, and the people wept on that night* (Numbers 14:1). See BT *Ta'anit* 29a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "That night was the night of the ninth of Av. The blessed Holy One said to them, 'You have wept for nothing [since I will help to

conquer the land of Canaan], but I designate for you a weeping for generations.'"

On the events of the seventeenth of Tammuz and the ninth of Av, see *Tosefta Ta'anit* 3:9; BT *Ta'anit* 28b–29a, *Arakhin* 11b; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 30. On "weeping for generations," see JT *Ta'anit* 4:6, 68d; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 1:1; BT *Sotah* 35a, *Sanhedrin* 104b; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 27, p. 145; 28, pp. 154–55; *Tanḥuma, Shelaḥ* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ* 21; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 16:20. Cf. Psalms 106:24–27.

185. **twenty-two days elapsed...** From the seventeenth of Tammuz through the ninth of Av. From here we learn that the Temples were destroyed as punishment for the sale of Joseph. This probably has a kabbalistic meaning as well—that for this entire period, divine overflow did not proceed from *Tif'eret* to *Yesod*, symbolized by Jacob and Joseph, respectively.

186. **had they uttered it...** The Levites' singing of the Psalms had magical power; had they sung the last line, its promise of *YHVH will annihilate them* would have been fulfilled.

Jehoiarib was the eponym of a clan that comprised the first of twenty-four priestly divisions; each division performed service in the Temple on a rotating "watch" (1 Chronicles 24:7). As the first of the clans to be chosen by lot, Jehoiarib was the most prestigious; this makes the destruction during that watch even more shocking.

On the magical use of Scripture, see M *Sanhedrin* 10:1; JT *Shabbat* 6:2, 8b; *Eruvin* 10:12, 26c; *Sanhedrin* 10:1, 28b; BT *Berakhot* 51a, 55b; *Shabbat* 67a, *Pesaḥim* 111a (and ad loc.: Rabbenu Ḥananel; Rashi, s.v. *niftaḥ be-el*; *Tosafot*, s.v. *niftaḥ be-el*), *Sanhedrin* 101a (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *u-vroqeq*), *Shevu'ot* 15b (and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *asur le-hitrap'ot*); Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin, Mezuzah, ve-Sefer Torah* 5:4; *Sefer Hasidim* (ed. Wiestenezki) 818; Caro,

Shulḥan Arukh, Yoreh De'ah 179:10; Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 299, 308–14, 378–81. Cf. BT *Arakhin* 11a.

On the timing of the destruction of the Temples, see BT *Ta'anit* 29a. Cf. *ZḤ* 32d, which states that the Temple was destroyed on a Thursday.

187. **sinned against Assembly of Israel…** The people had neglected the seventh year (the Sabbatical year) and thus sinned against *Shekhinah*, who is represented by Assembly of Israel. That God destroyed the Temple during the priestly watch of Jehoiarib is ironic because its name—which means "*YHVH* will contend [on behalf of]"—can also be construed as "*YHVH* accuses [of guilt]." The heinousness of the Israelites' multiple transgressions leads the blessed Holy One to threaten multiple generations of the people, as indicated in the verse from Jeremiah.

On Torah as a remedy, see above, note 175.

188. ***Rejoice greatly…*** The verse in Zechariah concludes: *poor and riding on an ass—on a donkey, foal of a she-ass*.

189. **Why does the Messiah come from Judah?…** Since Joseph is the predominantly heroic figure in this drama, the Messiah should be his descendant! There are, in fact, two different Messianic figures who bring salvation, one preceding the other: one is a descendant of Joseph, and the second descends from David. David deserves this recognition because he represents *Shekhinah*, who is the seventh of the lower *sefirot*, and because he is the seventh son in his family (see 1 Chronicles 2:15).

This teaching reflects the dual-Messiah doctrine, in which one military figure—designated Messiah son of Joseph—will arise and be defeated. He will be succeeded by Messiah son of David, who will bring about the ultimate redemption.

See *Targum Yerushalmi* on Exodus 40:11; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:1; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 72b; BT *Sukkah* 52a–b; *Midrash Tehillim* 60:3;

87:6; Sa’adiah Gaon, *Emunot ve-De’ot* 8:5; *Sefer Zerubbavel*; Naḥmanides on Exodus 17:9; Ezra ben Solomon of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim* (in *Kitvei Ramban*) 2:515; *Zohar* 1:25b (*TZ*); 3:278b, 279a (both *RM*); *ZḤ* 56b, 80d (*MhN, Rut*); Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*, 17–18; Berger, “Three Typological Themes,” 141–48; Lenowitz, *The Jewish Messiahs*, 31–32. Cf. *Zohar* 2:7b.

The phrase “kingship on earth is like kingship of the heavens,” derives from a story in BT *Berakhot* 20a.

190. **Why did Joshua wage war…** Exodus 17:8–9 reads: *Amalek came and waged war with Israel at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, “Choose men for us and go out, battle against Amalek tomorrow. I shall take my station on the hilltop, with the staff of God in my hand.”* This is the Bible’s first mention of Joshua, and it is startling that he is selected to lead this auspicious battle, hence the opening question.

According to rabbinic tradition, the attack by Amalek was enjoined by God as punishment for the Israelites’ desecration of the Sabbath. In the biblical narrative (Exodus 16:5, 26), God explained (through Moses) that a double portion of manna would fall on the sixth day, since none would fall on the seventh. Nonetheless, some of the people searched for manna on the Sabbath (ibid., 27), which profaned the day, thus inciting the subsequent assault by Amalek.

On Joshua’s being chosen to lead the battle, see *Zohar* 2:65b–66a. On the Israelites’ first Sabbath, see BT *Shabbat* 118b.

191. **regarding the Sabbath…** Why did the blessed Holy One give the commandment of the Sabbath specifically at the encampment site called Marah (which means “bitter”)? As a shield against the charges by the Attribute of Justice regarding the sale of Joseph. Since the Sabbath represents *Yesod* (also symbolized by Joseph), if the Israelites had punctiliously observed the Sabbath, that action would

have rectified the crime of selling Joseph. In the *Zohar*, "Tree of Life" usually symbolizes Written Torah; here, the author apparently builds upon the rabbinic assertion that the Sabbath is equal in value to the entire Torah. Joseph's brothers had cast him into חול (*ḥol*), "the dust." Later, the Israelites seeking manna on the seventh day אחילו (*aḥilu*), "profaned," the Sabbath, allowing the Attribute of Justice to press his case—and inciting Amalek.

On Torah as a remedy, see above, note 175. On the commandment of the Sabbath as being issued at Marah, see above, note 176. On the equivalence of the Sabbath to the entire Torah, see JT *Berakhot* 1:4, 3c; *Nedarim* 3:11, 38b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 20, p. 371; *Devarim Rabbah* 4:4; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 92; *Shemot Rabbah* 25:12; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33; Rashi on Numbers 15:41; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shabbat* 30:15; *Zohar* 2:47a, 89a, 92a, 151a; *ZḤ* 17b (*MhN*), 45a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 335; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110.

On the verse from Exodus, see above, note 175.

192. **you are a descendant of that righteous one…** Amalek will triumph unless a descendant of the victim Joseph—such as Joshua—defends the Israelites. Since the Sabbath is a symbol for *Yesod* and thus related to *Yesod*'s human exemplar—Joseph; and since both Joseph and the Sabbath were violated, it is fitting that a descendant of Joseph respond to the charges.

See *Tanḥuma, Bemidbar* 26: "[Joshua] was tested with Amalek, and he acted according to the Torah and as commanded. This is as is said: *Joshua disabled Amalek and his people by the edge of the sword* (Exodus 17:13). The blessed Holy One said to him, 'I am appointing someone from your tribe to exact vengeance from Amalek,' as is said: *From Ephraim, their roots in Amalek* (Judges 5:14). What is the meaning of מני (*mini*), *from, Ephraim*? מנה (*Maneh*), *Appoint, Ephraim* alone to uproot the source of Amalek."

193. **Joshua spoke to those behind the cloud…** According to Joshua 5:2–9, the Israelite generation born during the years of wandering in the desert had not been circumcised. Therefore God commanded Joshua to circumcise them as they entered the land of Canaan. According to rabbinic legend, Amalek mutilated some of the Israelites by cutting off the covenantal sign of circumcision (or the entire penis) and throwing it mockingly toward heaven. The Zoharic author reinterprets the imagery as divinely sanctioned circumcision; Joshua's flinging of foreskin upward underscores the relationship of proper observance of circumcision to the ancient sin of selling Joseph, who chastely guarded the mark of the covenant. The sinners are described as "behind the cloud" because the protective cloud of glory had expelled them.

See *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 10, in the name of Ḥinena son of Shiqla: "What did the house of Amalek do? They cut off the circumcised limbs of Israel and hurled them heavenward, shouting, 'This is what you chose—take what you have chosen!' For the Israelites did not know the nature of the phallus, until Amalek came along and taught them, as is said: *and they thrust the phallus up to My nose!* (Ezekiel 8:17)."

On Amalek's violent act, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 25:18; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 3:64; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:6, 11; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 10, 14; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29; *Zohar* 2:65b, 67a, 195a; 3:30b, 190a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 68; *Arukh ha-Shalem* 3:300–301. Cf. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 173.

194. **What is the meaning of אלימה (*Elimah*), *to Elim*?…** The Israelites turned to the extraordinary oasis of Elim as a sign of their restored devotion. Elim represents the divine realm, called here the "Mystery of Faith." The *twelve springs of water* symbolize the twelve angelic camps beneath *Shekhinah*, and the *seventy date-palms* signify the

seventy heavenly princes, which are manifested on earth by the seventy members of the Sanhedrin. The term מה (*mah*), *What*, signifies *Shekhinah*, which means that the notice *They… came Elimah* is actually a declaration: they came; *Eli Mah* (“*My God is Shekhinah*”). That is, their “destination” was an affirmation of faith. Alternatively, מה (*Mah*) may allude to the name יהוה (*YHVH*) spelled out completely: יוד הא ואו הא (*yod he vav he*) is numerically equivalent to the letters מ ה (*mem, he*), whose sum likewise equals forty-five and, if written as the word מה (*mah*), means “what.” According to this reading, they arrived at *My God, Forty-Five*, that is, the Name of Forty-Five Letters.

The paragraph concludes with the joyful declaration that indicates that even today, the enlightened can experience blissful gnosis.

On the superior quality of Elim, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1: “Scripture tells that that place was exalted for its water more than all other places…. Rabbi El’azar ha-Moda’i says, ‘When the blessed Holy One created His world, He created there twelve springs, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Jacob, and seventy date-palms, corresponding to the seventy elders. What was the Torah intending when it says *they camped there by the waters* (Exodus 15:27)? It comes to teach that they were plying words of Torah that had been given them at Marah.’” See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 15:25; *Targum Yerushalmi* on Exodus 15:27 and Numbers 33:9; on Exodus 15:27, see Rashi, Naḥmanides.

On *Mah* as a name for *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:1b–2a, 7a; 2:127a, 138a. On the meaning of *Mah*, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

195. **now they joined him to His Place…** The Israelites’ settling in Elim and studying Torah reunified *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, which are represented by “Righteous One” and “His place,” respectively. The serpent, signifying *Sitra Aḥra*, had caused the ancient sins; but the Israelites’ renewed spiritual commitment caused him, and his

polluting influence on *Shekhinah*, to abate. The place named *Marah*, "Bitter," was so called because of his wicked domination.

On the Torah that was taught at Marah, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 15:25; *Targum Yerushalmi* on Exodus 15:25; BT *Shabbat* 87b, *Sanhedrin* 56b, *Horayot* 8b; *Tanḥuma* (Buber) 19; Rashi on Exodus 15:25; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:32; cf. *Devarim Rabbah* 2:18.

196. **returned in *teshuvah* to their Master...** The Hebrew term *teshuvah* is commonly translated as "repentance," but its meaning is closer to "return, turning back to God." The phrase "returned in *teshuvah*" reflects precisely the Hebrew idiom.

197. וישלך **(*va-yashlekh*), *and he threw it...*** This word is a *notariqon* (specifically, a compound), comprised of the words *yesh* ("substance, existence"; alluding to the World that is Coming) and *lakh* (a prepositional phrase with a feminine referent). Both terms signify *Binah*. According to rabbinic interpretation, the term *yesh* signifies reward in the world to come (see sources below); the *gimatriyyah* of *lakh* is fifty, which is associated with the fifty gates of *binah*, "understanding."

Casting the tree into the bitter waters thus had the further effect of uniting *Binah* (represented by both "World that is Coming" and "*yesh*," along with Her fifty gates) with the upper *sefirot* known as *Ḥokhmah* and Holy Ancient One (another name for *Keter*). This in turn led to the divine overflow that filled *Shekhinah*, called here Field of Apples.

The image of the "field of (holy) apples" derives from an interpretation of Genesis 27:27: *He* [Isaac] *smelled the fragrance of his* [Jacob's] *garments and blessed him and said, 'See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH.'* See BT *Ta'anit* 29b, in the name of Rav: "*Like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH*—... like the fragrance of a field of apple trees."

The trope of “fifty gates of understanding” is based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu’el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): “Fifty gates of *binah*, understanding, were created in the world; and all were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6).”

On *yesh* as signifying the heavenly reward of the righteous, see M *Avot* 5:19; *Uqtsin* 3:12; BT *Sanhedrin* 100a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim, Vezot Haberakhah*, 451; *Zohar* 1:4b, 88a, 156b (last two *ST*), 206a, 242b; 2:166b; *ZḤ* 64a (*ShS*). On the fifty gates, see Naḥmanides, *Peirush al ha-Torah*, Introduction, 3–4; *Zohar* 1:3b, 106a, 208b, 261b (*Hash*); 2:68b (*Tos*), 83a, 123a, 139b, 175b, 183a; 3:15b, 142a (*IR*), 233b; *ZḤ* 48a (*MhN, Rut*), 67b, 73a (last two *ShS*), 82b (*MhN, Rut*).

198. ***they encamped שׁם (sham), there…*** The author engages in wordplay, interpreting the word שׁם (*sham*), *there*, as סם (*sam*), *elixir* (or *remedy, medication*), so as to read the verse as *They encamped at the elixir*. The exchange of the letters שׁ (*shin*), שׂ (*sin*), and ס (*samekh*) is common in rabbinic and kabbalistic wordplay. Further, it is probably playing on Exodus 15:25: שׂם שׁם (*sham sam*), *There He placed*, reading it as *There was an elixir* [or: *remedy, medication*].

See above, note 175.

199. **The staff was engraved on two sides…** According to ancient traditions, magical power resided within Moses’ staff on account of the divine name that was hewn within it. The two sides of the staff reflect two different manifestations of Judgment: one side of the staff expressed a blend of Compassion and Judgment, while the other side displayed an intensified expression of Judgment. The snake often symbolizes the demonic realm, and the rock symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who executes Judgment. The image of the *snake on a rock* suggests a compounding of Judgment, without divine Compassion at all, but it also

represents the domestication of the serpent's prosecutorial role and inclusion within divine Judgment.

On the term *baraita*, see above, note 51.

See *Bahir* 50 (75): "Why does the Torah say *righteousness, righteousness* twice?… The first *righteousness* is righteousness, actually—this is *Shekhinah*…. What is the second *righteousness*? This is the righteousness that frightens the righteous."

The following homily attempts to explain the esoteric meaning of the image of a *snake on a rock*, and to understand the way in which *Gevurah*, represented by the *snake*, can be harmonized with the side of *Ḥesed*. Ultimately, the teaching is wrestling with the problem of evil in a monotheistic system that allows for multiple manifestations of Divinity.

On the staff's being engraved with the divine name, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 2:21; 4:20; 14:21; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:8; 11:10; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 87; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, add. 2, 78b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Midrash Tehillim* 114:9; *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 14:21; *Sefer ha-Yashar, Shemot*, 307; *Zohar* 1:6b, 9a; 2:28a, 48a, 60b, 64a. Cf. Ibn Ezra (short), Exodus 3:13. On the verse from Proverbs, cf. Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 93b. On the neutralization of the demonic aspect of the snake, see *Bahir* 107 (161), 109 (162–63); *Zohar* 2:60a; Gikatilla, *Sod ha-Nahash u-Mishpato*, 2–3; Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape*, 78–82; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:454–56; Schneider, "Mitos ha-Satan be-Sefer ha-Bahir," 290–315. On the engraving of a snake, see *Zohar* 1:173a; 2:107a; cf. M *Avodah Zarah* 3:3; *Zohar* 2:64a.

The verse from Proverbs and the preceding verse read: *Three things there are too wondrous for me, and four that I cannot know: the eagle's way in the heavens, the way of the snake on a rock, the ship's way in the heart of the sea, and the way of a man in a young woman*.

The rest of *parashat Be-Shallaḥ* as found in the printed texts is absent in the three manuscripts used here: T1, V5, and P1. These manuscripts proceed with a commentary of Ezekiel's chariot (see below, pages 590–600). The only other witness for the textual material here is *Zohar* 2:271b–272b (*Tosafot*).

200. **incline it...** According to the verse's simple sense, the imperative verb נטה (*neteh*) means *stretch*, but here it is interpreted according to another of its meanings: "turn, incline, bend." The first use of the staff at the sea was to part the waters so that the Israelites could pass through safely. The only side of the staff fit for that task was the one engraved with Compassion and Judgment, so God instructed Moses to turn that side toward the water. (The alternate reading, *reached out his hand*, would have misleadingly implied that both sides of the staff were used.)

Exodus 14:21 reads in full: *Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and YHVH drove the sea with a mighty east wind all night, and He turned the sea into dry ground, and the waters were split*.

201. ***snake on a rock* was already engraved upon it…** According to rabbinic tradition, this staff was one of the ten miraculous items that was created at twilight before the first Sabbath. One might have thought that compound Judgment was engraved upon it at that primordial time. The *Zohar* explains that it was only at the site of the burning bush—when God first instructed Moses to cast the staff to the earth—that the staff's impact on the rock-like ground caused its transformation into a snake, and also effected new engravings.

This argument may be part of an ongoing kabbalistic debate about the origins of evil, and whether the harshest aspects of Judgment were present at the earliest stages of creation. If the snake is integrated into the Godhead only as Moses prepares to meet Pharaoh, it means that the historical confrontation with evil is dynamic—progressing and changing as history proceeds.

202. **Two signs were performed at the sea…** The side of the staff that bore engravings of divine Compassion and Judgment is what saved the Israelites and drowned the Egyptians.

On the twelve paths through the sea, see *Mekhilta, Vayḥi* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 14:16; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Leqaḥ Tov* on Exodus 14:16.

203. **Turn the stick from the other side…** Just as the side of the staff engraved with Compassion and Judgment performed two miracles, so too the side hewn with compound Judgment would perform two miraculous modes for extracting water from a rock, one at Mt. Horeb (see Exodus 17:6), and the other at the waters of Meribah (Numbers 20:8–11). In the first instance, Moses is told to strike the צור (*tsur*), *rock*; in the second, God instructs him to speak to the סלע (*sela*), *boulder*. Each occasion was designed to perfect one aspect of Judgment in the phrase *snake on a*

rock. The aspect of Judgment represented by *snake* would have to be perfected in the latter episode.

204. ***you shall speak…*** In the episode in Numbers, the miracle was to be performed through Moses' speaking to the rock, in order to consummate the aspect of *snake*—and thus complete the different names of God associated with Judgment.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, 'Take the staff and assemble the community, you and Aaron your brother, and you shall speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; I shall bring forth water for them from the rock and give drink to the community and its beasts.'*

205. **power of the snake is in its mouth…** The snake's skill is with its mouth—through verbal trickery in Genesis 3 and, subsequently, with its bite. Consequently, according to the notion of measure for measure, speech is the appropriate method for defeating the snake; hence God commands Moses to speak to the rock. However, not only did he fail to follow God's instruction, but also the people complained aloud. Hence the snake retained its power—and God unleashed a plague of fiery serpents, demonstrating the snake's continued strength. Moses had not completed God's name of *snake on a rock*, focusing exclusively on God's name as *rock*.

The phrase "he struck" (not from the verse) renders מחא (*maḥa*); alternatively, "protested, rebelled." The Aramaic term communicates both Moses' act and God's negative assessment of it.

206. ***rock* is for making…** The Hebrew root צור (*tsur*) means "create, fashion, form," and thus any commandment regarding the צור (*tsur*), *rock*, will be executed differently than one involving speech. Moses hit the rock twice, and as a result he left one aspect of God's names—as engraved upon the staff—unfulfilled.

207. **the full name was not completed…** Because Moses did not complete the task of consummating God's name, so too he was prevented from completing the redemption of Israel and bringing them into the land.

208. **Moses knew in his heart…** When Moses first saw his staff turn into a snake, he turned to flee—indicating a visceral awareness of the snake's frightful power. He did not understand at the time that he could have overcome the snake's power later had he listened to God's command, and that his failure to do so would lead to his own failure to complete his mission.

And Moses fled renders וינס משה (*va-yanas Moshe*), which serves the author here as a convenient play on the word נס (*nes*), *miracle* (or *standard*), which fuels further homiletical interpretations. See next paragraph. On Moses' fear of the serpent, see *Zohar* 2:34a.

209. ***the miracle…*** The context and simple meaning of Numbers 21:8–9 reads: *YHVH said to Moses, 'Make yourself a serpent and put it on* נס (*nes*), *a standard, and so then, whoever is bitten will see it and live.' And Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it on* הנס (*ha-nes*), *a standard*; *and so then, if the serpent bit anyone, he looked on the serpent of bronze and lived*. Here, the author creatively interprets the term *nes* to mean *miracle* (a homonym), rather than *standard*. He also uses the discrepancy between God's instruction in which there is no article preceding the term *nes* (though translated with the indefinite article "a") and Moses' fulfillment of the task in which the definite article ה (*ha*), "the," is included. The author interprets this to mean that Moses intended to rectify his previous misdeed by applying the snake in this episode to the previous unfulfilled miracle. Nonetheless, God reprimands Moses, saying that the miracle with the snake needed to manifest in relation to the extraction of water, and indeed this outcome was not achieved.

From the kabbalistic perspective, Moses' failure was that he did not properly join the snake to water—a failure that represents the harshest manifestation of *Gevurah* and *Ḥesed*, respectively.

210. **the sign proclaims a miracle…** A miracle was achieved with the snake upon the נס (*nes*), *standard*, even if the full divine harmonization of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* was not attained.

211. ***For yourself*—for your purpose…** Moses left a deficiency in the concretization of God's name on earth when he struck the rock rather than speaking to it, and this failure led to his being barred entry to the land of Israel. Although he now understood that the serpent, representing Judgment, was a crucial element, by fashioning the bronze serpent he rectified only vision, not speech. The latter he could fix only in the presence of water, so as to consummate *Ḥesed*—which is signified by water.

On the sense of *for yourself*, cf. Rashi and Naḥmanides on Genesis 12:1; *Zohar* 1:77a (*ST*), 77b–78a.

212. **You refined vision…** As a reward for mending the divine aspect of vision, the blessed Holy One compensated Moses by granting him a view of the land of Israel, even though the original punishment for striking the rock precluded that sight.

There is a slight discrepancy between MT and the *Zohar*'s rendering of the verse in Numbers. On such deviations, see above, pp. 365–66, n. 136.

213. **serpent is the curse of the world!…** This was Moses' justification for not speaking to the rock at Meribah. Knowing that the serpent's power lay in his mouth, Moses did not want to employ what he perceived to be demonic methods to procure water for the Israelites. Once he understood that the snake manifested divine judgment and had to be integrated within the divine economy, through engraving of *snake on a rock*, he proclaimed God's

perfection—and acknowledged the justice of his own punishment.

The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *The Rock—His action is perfect, for all His ways are justice. A steadfast God without wrong, just and upright is He*.

214. ***El* derives from compassion…** How can the name *El* be a manifestation of judgment from the serpent, when it is recognized as the source of compassion? This divine name actually signifies *Ḥesed*—also known as *Gedullah* ("Greatness")—as indicated by God's gracious act of freeing the Israelites from Egypt, and by the phrase האל הגדול (*ha-El ha-gadol*), *the great God*.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3: "How do we know that *Eli*, my God, always signifies the attribute of compassion? It is said: אלי אלי (*Eli, Eli*), *My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?* (Psalms 22:2). And it also says: *El, God, please, heal her, please* (Numbers 12:13). And it also says: *YHVH* is *El, God, and He shines upon us* (Psalms 118:27)." See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:2; cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 111a.

On *El* signifying *Ḥesed*, see *Zohar* 1:16b, 17b, 94a; 2:253a (*Heikh*); 3:11a–b, 23b, 30b, 38b, 65a; *ZḤ* 45a, 50d, 63b (*ShS*); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 76b–78b.

215. ***El* alone has ability…** As Rabbi Yitsḥak indicates, the name *El* also connotes "strength, might, power, ability." See Deuteronomy 28:32; Proverbs 3:27; Micah 2:1; Nehemiah 5:5. Here, this sense refers to the strength to subdue the forces of Judgment below. Rabbi Yitsḥak reads the verse as *El has my power* [to *do you harm*], meaning that Laban understands that the blessed Holy One even has control over his own distinct skill with the evil eye.

216. ***El, the great, the mighty…*** Here Rabbi Ḥiyya concedes the point, adding the verse from Deuteronomy to indicate that the name *El* can function as an expression of might, as well. Further, *The Rock* who is *perfect* is identified with *El*, who signifies the God of both compassion and might. He can encompass the divine judgment that is represented

by the image of the *snake on a rock*—judgment that entails punishment for the wicked and life for the righteous.

The author employs the rhyme of *El* and *avel*—joining opposites together—as an aural echo of the paradoxical and ambiguous relationship of the holy and demonic as represented by the *snake on a rock*.

On the verse from Proverbs, see above, note 199.

217. ***Would El, God, pervert justice…*** Even though the name *El* incorporates the judgment by the snake—a creature with a crooked path—*El* is just, and His punishments are just. This underscores the complexity of the blessed Holy One: the attribute of compassion prevails over—even as it is compatible with—the attribute of justice.

218. ***what El YHVH would speak*** The full verse reads: *Let me hear what El YHVH would speak when He speaks peace to His people and to His faithful, that they turn not back to folly*. The name *El* connotes justice for the righteous and the wicked.

Perhaps this passage implicitly chastises the Jewish community in Castile, who—in the eyes of the Zoharic authors—suffered periodic persecution in consequence of their religious backsliding. See Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 257–70; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1371–72; Hecker, "The Face of Shame," 42–46.

219. ***matteh*, inclined toward *Ḥesed*…** The *Zohar* creatively misreads the verse in Deuteronomy in order to equate its juxtaposed terms *matteh, staff* (literally *bend, incline*), and *mishpat, justice* (or *case*). By grasping the previously serpentine staff, Moses sees how the dangerous snake—a symbol of *Gevurah*—can be turned toward *Ḥesed*.

In its simple sense, the full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *'Cursed be he* מטה משפט (*matteh mishpat*), *who skews the case, of a sojourner, orphan, or widow!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'*

220. **two staffs…** The staff of Moses was a physical staff, while *the staff of Elohim* was a divine potency. Yet when

this divine power materialized in Moses' staff, they functioned as one, as indicated. The divine staff is a symbol of *Shekhinah*, who is signified by the name *Elohim*, over whom Moses prevails when he is unified with *Tif'eret*.

On the *staff of Elohim*, see Exodus 4:20; 17:9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 26; *Leqaḥ Tov, Shemot* 17; *Zohar* 1:6b. On the staff of Moses, see Exodus 9:23; 10:13. On the two staffs, see *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 23; *Shemot Rabbah* 26:3; *Zohar* 2:48a, 115a (*RM*). According to *Ra'aya Meheimna* and *Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*, Metatron (the chief angel) is known as *staff* or *the staff of Elohim*. See *Zohar* 1:27a (*TZ*); 3:255a, 277a (last two *RM*); *ZḤ* 110d (*Tiq*); *TZ* 60, 93b.

221. **After the Dwelling was erected…** The Dwelling (or Tabernacle) represents *Shekhinah*; the staff used to reside there except when Moses required it during the sojourn in the desert. Normally in the *Zohar*, the ark of the testimony represents *Shekhinah* as the housing for *Yesod*. That symbolic relation of divine eros is mirrored by the positioning of the staff *before YHVH*.

222. **The staff was made of sapphire…** According to rabbinic tradition, ten supernatural phenomena were created already on the world's first Sabbath eve at twilight; these included the miraculous script that was incised into the tablets given at Mount Sinai, and the staff in question.

See M *Avot* 5:6. On the sapphirine staff, see *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 9, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah: "The staff had the volume of forty *se'ah* [332 or 573 liters, according to two main modern halakhic opinions], was made of sapphire, and the ten plagues were engraved upon it." See *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 21; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 8; *Shemot Rabbah, Va'era* 8:3 (and Shinan's note there); *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 14, p. 264; *Otsar ha-Midrashim* (ed. Eisenstein), p. 360.

223. ***like the appearance of sapphire…*** As the throne in Ezekiel's vision represents *Shekhinah* and is made of

sapphire, so too the staff of *Elohim* is sapphirine as an element of the throne scene.

224. ***YHVH showed him a tree…*** Rabbi Yehoshu'a identifies the tree that Moses threw into the bitter waters at Marah with the heavenly staff—it sweetened them. He interprets the word חק (*ḥoq*), *statute*, in terms of its root form חקק (*ḥqq*), "to engrave, hew." Since the staff was engraved with divine names (according to rabbinic tradition) and was engraved with the name *snake on a rock* —which illustrated the incorporation of harsh judgment within heavenly justice—the blessed Holy One established that the staff would be used for performing miracles and for establishing divine law. Rabbi Yehoshu'a also plays on the word נסהו (*nissahu*), *He tested him*, as a reference to נסים (*nissim*), "miracles"—rereading the phrase to mean [*the staff*] *performed a miracle there*.

225. **sanctified only with sweetened waters** God declares that His name can be sanctified only when judgments—which come from the side of *Gevurah*—have been refined within the waters of *Ḥesed*.

226. **murky waters and… dear waters…** One might have thought that since water comes from the side of *Ḥesed*, there can be only sweet waters. Rabbi Yehudah points out that the existence of murky or bitter waters indicates that even water can have different aspects. His comment underscores that demonic forces parallel the powers on the side of holiness.

On murky waters as identified with the *Sitra Aḥra*, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 48; *Zohar* 1:66a, 80a (ST, standard editions); 2:167b; 3:12a.

227. **Why did he cry out?…** See *Bahir* 107 (161): "[Satan] continued to denounce Moses until *he cried out to YHVH, and YHVH showed him a tree* (Exodus 15:25). What is the meaning of *YHVH showed him a tree* (Exodus 15:25)? This teaches us that the Tree of Life was near the water. Satan came and removed it in order to denounce Israel and

cause them to sin against their Father in heaven…. When [Satan] saw that he could not overcome them, he fortified himself against Israel and Moses. The people came, and *they murmured against Moses*…. As soon as Moses saw Satan, *He cried out to YHVH, and YHVH showed him a tree* (ibid.)—the same Tree of Life that Satan had removed. *He threw it into the water, and the water turned sweet* (ibid.)."

Here Moses cries out to the blessed Holy One as a response to Satan's determined persecution. God advises him that the snake, representing *Gevurah*, should now be impressed upon the *rock*, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. Thus Rabbi Yehudah reinterprets Exodus 15:25 to mean that the snake should be engraved there—along with justice, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. The two aspects of Judgment—as manifest by the *snake* and the *rock*—are thus both integrated within Divinity at that moment in sacral history.

228. **I must reveal the secret…** Rabbi Abba feels obliged to divulge the entire mystery, lest Rabbi Yehudah's partial disclosure be misconstrued.

229. **straw that rules over Israel…** Apparently speaking to Moses at the burning bush, God tells him that Aaron's magical power can fend off demonic powers, which are represented by the straw that the Israelites were using to make bricks. Those forces will become more formidable at the sea and at Marah—whereupon a more formidable defense will be required.

Rabbinic interpretation mocks the Egyptians by comparing them to straw, in contrast to the Amorites, who are compared to cedar and oak trees. See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 15:7. Cf. *Midrash Shir ha-Shirim* on Song of Songs 2:3, 15; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 10, 35b; *Midrash Tehillim* 2:13.

Alternatively, *Matoq mi-Devash* suggests that the *gimatriyyah* of קש (*qash*) equals 400, corresponding to the number of years of Egyptian exile that would befall the

Israelites, as God told Abraham at the covenant between the pieces (Genesis 15:13).

230. **Rahab…** This menacing figure, who threatens Israel's redemption, is a conflation of identities from prior literature. In Scripture, Rahab is a mythical monster of chaos, whose name (meaning "one who surges") alludes to the stormy sea; but the name also appears as a poetic designation for Egypt. According to rabbinic tradition, the heavenly prince of Egypt challenged Israel's worthiness for the miracle of splitting the Red Sea. Also in rabbinic literature, Rahab is identified as Prince of the Sea.

Rabbi Abba wonders why God gives Moses two commands. He answers his own question, saying that the first phrase (*raise your staff*) instructs Moses how to vanquish Rahab, while the second phrase (*stretch out your hand*) refers to the splitting of the sea.

On Rahab as a sea monster, see Isaiah 51:9; Psalms 89:11; Job 9:13; 26:12; BT *Bava Batra* 74b; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 18:22. On Rahab as a reference to Egypt, see Psalms 87:4; cf. Isaiah 30:7. On Rahab appearing at the Red Sea, see *Midrash Va-Yosha* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:46–47); *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 14:21. These last two sources (along with the biblical poetic connection between Rahab and Egypt) may have influenced the *Zohar*'s identification of Rahab as Prince of Egypt. See also *Zohar* 2:170b; 3:192b; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 286–88.

On the angelic challenge at the sea, see *Shemot Rabbah* 21:7 (where Samael accuses Israel); *Midrash Avkir*, 44 (where Uzza is the Prince of Egypt), 46; *Midrash Va-Yosha* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:39–40 [a variant of the passage in *Avkir*, 44], 46–47; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Exodus 234, 241, 243; *Zohar* 2:56a; 3:101b; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:7–8, nn. 40–42.

231. **here is עצה (*eitsah*), an idea…** Rabbi Abba blends together various rabbinic and kabbalistic themes to explain the imagery of Exodus 15:25. The עץ (*eits*), *tree*, signifies the

Tree of Life, Torah, or Wisdom, which will defeat the machinations of the serpent who seeks to confound the Israelites. Punning on the term *eits*, the עצה (*eitsah*), "idea" (or "advice, counsel"), offered by the blessed Holy One to throw the tree into the water restores wisdom to the Israelites; sweetens the bitter waters; and domesticates Harsh Judgment, represented by the serpent. Hard Judgment then becomes aligned with Soft Judgment, symbolized by the rock, so that they become engraved together.

The demonic serpent in this entire homily apparently derived from holiness, but it then needed to be neutralized so that it could be reintegrated into the divine economy. On the imagery here, see *Bahir* 107 (quoted above, note 227); Schneider, "Mitos ha-Satan," esp. 290–98. On the theme of the demonic being reintegrated into the dimension of holiness, see Wolfson, *Luminal Darkness*, 1–55.

232. **He crowned it…** The simple meaning of the verse is *There* נסהו (*nissahu*), *he tested him* [or: *them*], but the *Zohar* follows the rabbinic recasting of the verb (see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1) as נשא לו (*nasa lo*), *raised him up* (2 Kings 25:27), to indicate that the staff had attained its potential for performing miracles. It adds another wordplay by reading *nissahu, raised him up*, as a cognate of *nissim*, "miracles," to suggest that this was the point at which the staff became most fully miraculous. God said to Moses that there were now two signs that would benefit him and Israel —the rock "near the waters," and the serpent—for sanctifying the divine name.

233. **tree with seventy souls…** Exodus 15:27 describes the idyllic scene at Elim. Here, the blessed Holy One assures Moses that there is no need for the staff, with its various imprints of Judgment.

Jacob symbolizes the cosmic tree, *Tif'eret*, source of souls; Jacob himself came down to Egypt with seventy family members (Genesis 46:8–27; Exodus 1:1–5), which formed

the nucleus of the twelve tribes. The geography at Elim is the earthly counterpart to the spiritual ancestors of the people of Israel.

See *Bahir* 107 (161): "What is the meaning of *They came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy date palms; and they encamped there beside the waters*? What is so special about seventy date palms? In the smallest place there can be a thousand! But [this teaches us that] they were worthy of their counterpart, and they are likened to date palms."

Exodus 15:27 reads in full: *They came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy date palms; and they encamped there beside* [or: *over*] *the waters*.

234. **this place called אילן (*Ilan*), Tree…** Rabbi Abba links Elim to the terebinths merely to prove the appropriateness of his association of Elim with Jacob, who symbolizes the Tree of Life. (In this context, it seems odd to refer to Isaiah's critical reminder of Israel's backsliding, but perhaps the verb is supposed to be construed or vocalized differently, yielding something like "*for* [*otherwise, without protection*] *you will dry out* (*yaveshu*) *from Elim, which you desired*.")

On the identification of Elim the place with a tree, see Isaac ibn Sahula, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 476, discussing the place-name אילם (*Elim*) in Exodus 15:27: "It has been taught in the names of the Masters of the Mishnah: 'אלים (*Elim*) is a tree, as is said: *For you will be ashamed* מאילים (*me-eilim*), *of the terebinths, that you desired*. It is a tree in which they used to carve an idolatrous image; and as the tree grew, the idolatrous image would grow along with it—and it was called *eilim*, gods.' So this *Elim* is an actual tree." See also *Zohar* 2:59a, 62b.

235. **we learn that it excludes another place…** The specification of *there* in Exodus 15:25, when referring to the engraving upon the staff, implies that there will be another place, namely Elim, in which the staff will not be

needed to draw water from the rock. Subsequently, however, the engraved staff will be instrumental.

236. **waters came to prosecute…** Forces of judgment contained within the rock, which signifies *Shekhinah*, are symbolized by "the waters." God instructs Moses to subdue them by striking the rock. Forces of judgment from *Gevurah*, which is signified by the snake, would be addressed later.

237. **More is needed here!…** Moses recognized the immensity of the danger by the fact that the blessed Holy One announced that He Himself would stand at the rock at Horeb—obviously not relying on Moses and his staff alone.

238. **At Meribah…** The demonic forces represented by the waters at Meribah (Numbers 20:1–13) bonded with the Israelites and provoked their demands for water. God enjoined Moses to reveal the staff with its serpentine engraving; speaking to the rock would demonstrate publicly that the wicked powers were in fact under Divine sovereignty. At first the Israelites united with those powers in public defiance of God—*before their eyes*. The intent of the blessed Holy One was to demonstrate *before their eyes* how the powers of the demonic side were to be domesticated.

239. **this alludes to Pharaoh…** In the *Zohar*, Pharaoh is often called the Great Snake. Salvation by *YHVH* from Pharaoh and the Egyptians is depicted here as the mythical neutralization of the demonic serpent.

The context in Psalms 124:2–5 reads (according to its simple sense): *Had it not been YHVH who was for us when people rose against us, then they would have swallowed us alive when their wrath flared hot against us. Then the waters would have swept us up, the torrent come up past our necks. Then it would have swept over us* [or: *come up past our necks*]*—the raging waters*.

240. **led him to forgo the snake…** Moses disobeyed God's command to speak to the rock at Meribah because he concluded that the snake had sovereignty over dust, not

water—as indicated by the verses in Genesis and Exodus. Thus he decided to rely on the proven method of striking the rock instead.

241. ***you did not trust Me…*** The full verse in Numbers reads: *YHVH said to Moses and to Aaron, 'Inasmuch as you did not trust Me to sanctify Me before the eyes of the Israelites, even so you shall not bring this assembly to the land that I have given to them.'*

242. **[T1 213b]** The following commentary on Ezekiel's chariot is found only in manuscripts T1 and V5, whose provenance is the Byzantine region. For a comprehensive study of this commentary, see Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel: Peirush Zohari Bilti Yadu'a."

243. ***In the thirtieth year…*** These are the opening words of Ezekiel's description of his vision of the chariot. The prophet marks the date in relation to the discovery of the scroll of the Torah by the high priest Hilkiah—who is said here to be the father of Ezekiel's father, Jeremiah. In the biblical story, King Josiah read from that scroll; and after learning of its warnings about the destruction that would ensue upon Israel's disobedience, he promptly repented and implemented reforms. The episode is related in 2 Kings 22.

Ezekiel 1:3 refers to the prophet as the son of בוזי (*Buzi*), *Buzi*; and based on the presumed etymological link to the root *bzh*, "to spurn, despise," it is construed as an epithet that identifies Ezekiel's father as Jeremiah—who suffered scorn in the eyes of the Israelites.

On the dating of Ezekiel's exile, see *Targum Yonatan* on Ezekiel 1:1; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 26; Rashi on Ezekiel 1:2, s.v. *hi ha-shanah ha-ḥamishit*; Radak on Ezekiel 1:1, s.v. *be-sheloshim*; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 39–40; Halperin, *Seeking Ezekiel*, 187; Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel," 598, n. 3. On the scorn heaped upon Jeremiah, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 13:12; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 7, p. 34; *Bereshit Rabbati, Vayishlaḥ* 35:18. Cf. *Zohar* 2:166a–b; Moses de

León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 130–31. On Ezekiel as the son of Jeremiah, see Radak on Ezekiel 1:3; *Arukh*, s.v. *bz*; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 353; Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel," 599, n. 5. On Jeremiah as the son of Hilkiah, see Jeremiah 1:1.

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *In the thirtieth year, on the fifth day of the fourth month, when I was in the midst of the exile, by the River Kevar, the heavens opened and I saw visions of God*.

244. **three rungs…** The author offers another interpretation of the word *thirtieth*, indicating that each of the three figures in the genealogy—Hilkiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel—is patterned spiritually after the ten *sefirot*.

On Ezekiel's exalted lineage, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 2:8; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 7, p. 34. On Jeremiah's similarity to Moses, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 13:6.

245. **Twenty-five years…** On the number twenty-five as a symbol of divine judgment, see *Zohar* 2:37b; 3:145b–146a, 148a; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 13a. On *teshuvah*, see above, note 196.

246. **thirty degrees…** The people of Israel had caused a blemish in *Shekhinah*, represented by the moon. Since a full lunar month consists of nearly thirty days, a corresponding period was required in order to restore *Shekhinah* to Her fullness. This is why they languished in exile for thirty years, after which Ezekiel is bestowed with a chariot vision to raise their flagging spirits.

247. **three rungs that fill the well…** Apparently signifying *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*, who all pour divine efflux into *Shekhinah*. The image of the three flocks of sheep derives from Genesis 29:2: *He looked, and here: a well in the field, and there were three flocks of sheep lying beside it, for from that well the flocks were watered. The stone on the mouth of the well was large*. At times, those three *sefirot* receive divine overflow from *Gevurah*, represented by the

north and by the stone on the mouth of the well. In those instances, *Shekhinah* casts judgments upon the world.

Since each *sefirah* itself encompasses ten rungs within it, yielding a total of one hundred rungs, these one hundred correspond to the required number of blessings to be recited daily. See BT *Menaḥot* 43b, in the name of Rabbi Me'ir: "A person must recite one hundred blessings every day, as is said: *Now, O Israel*, מה (*mah*), *what, does YHVH your God ask of you?* (Deuteronomy 10:12)." The word *mah* is read as מאה (*me'ah*), *one hundred*: God requires one hundred blessings.

See Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *mah YHVH Eloheikha*; *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *sho'el me-immakh*; *Zohar* 1:76b–77a (*ST*); *Minḥat Shai* on Deuteronomy, ibid. On the three flocks of sheep, cf. *Zohar* 1:151b (*ST*), 152a (*Tos*).

248. **Tammuz...** This is the fourth month of the year, counting from the springtime month of Nisan. Other Spanish kabbalistic commentaries also indicate that *the fourth*—representing the fourth letter of the tetragrammaton, or the fourth day of the week with its associated punishment against the moon—signifies judgment. When Moses ascended Mount Sinai and was given the tablets, the people of Israel were released from death; but in the month of Tammuz, that protection vanished.

On freedom from the Angel of Death, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 47, in the name of El'azar son of Arakh: "All those days, before they had done that deed, they were superior to the ministering angels before the blessed Holy One. The Angel of Death did not govern them; and they did not discharge any excretions like mortal humans. But when they performed that act, the blessed Holy One was furious with them, saying, 'I thought that you would be before me like the ministering angels, as is said: *I Myself said, "You are angels, children of the Most High, all of you*" (Psalms 82:6). But now, *like Adam you shall die* (ibid., 7).'" See also

Shemot Rabbah 41:7. Given that Moses ascended Mount Sinai in the *third new moon after the Children of Israel's going out from the land of Egypt* (Exodus 19:1), which was Sivan, and that he descended forty days later, it follows that the sin of the golden calf occurred in Tammuz.

On Tammuz and judgment, see M *Ta'anit* 4:6; JT *Ta'anit* 4:6, 68c; BT *Yoma* 4b; next note. On *the fourth* and judgment, see *ZḤ* 37c–d; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 48; idem, *Sha'arei Orah*, 48a; Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel," 602, n. 16.

249. **Tammuz, Av, and Tevet…** The months of Tevet, Tammuz, and Av are ominous months in the Jewish calendar. Traditionally, on the tenth of Tevet, the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem began (2 Kings 25:2). On the seventeenth of Tammuz, the walls of Jerusalem were breached by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.E. and by Titus in 70 C.E. Three weeks later, on the ninth of Av, the First and Second Temples were destroyed.

On the fateful nature of these months, see *Zohar* 2:12a, 78b; 3:259a; *ZḤ* 36d (*RR*); 92d (*MhN, Eikhah*); above, pp. 358–59, n. 117.

250. **Torah was given in the third…** Referring to Sivan, the third month, when the Torah was given. The number thirty signifies the triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*—the latter being symbolized by Written Torah. Since all *sefirot* are comprised by ten rungs within them, the number thirty here surely refers to this grouping.

251. ***even I*—with you in exile…** Why does the biblical text switch from the third-person description in verse 1 to first-person in verse 3? In the *Zohar* the word אני (*Ani*), "I," symbolizes *Shekhinah* and, according to rabbinic tradition, She descended into exile with the Israelites. Since the second ה (*he*) of the tetragrammaton symbolizes *Shekhinah* and is also numerically equivalent to the number five,

Scripture refers to the *fifth day* [*of the month*] as an additional allusion to Her presence.

On *Shekhinah*'s descent into exile, see BT *Megillah* 29a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them.... When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them.... And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them." See above, p. 445, n. 5; p. 451, n. 17.

On *Shekhinah* as אני (*ani*), *I*, see *Zohar* 1:6a–b, 65b, 204b, 228a; 2:236b; *ZḤ* 37c, 75a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 380 (and Wolfson's notes); Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 349; cf. *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 3. On the *fifth day* as a symbol for *Shekhinah*, see *ZḤ* 38b–c; Gikatilla, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 49.

Ezekiel 1:3 reads in full: *Happening it happened, that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Kevar, and there the hand of YHVH came upon him*.

252. ***River of Already...*** The prophet Ezekiel experienced his vision at the Kevar Canal, located near the town of Nippur in Babylon. The Hebrew word נהר (*nahar*), literally "river," resembles the Aramaic נהורא (*nehora*), "light"; and in Hebrew, the word כבר (*kevar*) means "already" (or "long ago"). In Akkadian (the language of Babylon), the name of Ezekiel's *Kevar River* means "the great river."

The "artisan and the metalsmith" renders המסגר והחרש (*ha-masger ve-he-ḥarash*), deriving from 2 Kings 24:14, which describes the elite groups who were exiled. According to rabbinic interpretation, the metalsmith signifies Messianic figures involved in the construction of the Temple. Here, these terms serve as code for mystical initiates whom *Shekhinah* did not want to forsake in particular.

See 2 Kings 24:14: [*The king of Babylonia*] *exiled all Jerusalem and all the commanders and all the valiant warriors—ten thousand exiles; and no artisan nor metalsmith remained, only the poor people of the land*. See also ibid., 15–16; Jeremiah 24:1; 29:2.

On primordial illumination, see Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 196; Jacob ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 86–87; above, pp. 447–48, n. 10. On the Kevar Canal, see Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel*, 4.

On the "artisan and the metalsmith," see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 25; BT *Sukkah* 52b (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *ḥarashim*); *Gittin* 88a (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *keivan she-sogrin*); Rashi on Ezekiel 1:3; Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel," 580–82 and n. 62.

253. ***Happening it happened…*** This phrase combines the infinitive and finite forms of the verb "to be." It can be rendered more idiomatically as simply *It happened*, but the *Zohar* focuses on the double form, suggesting that there are two referents for the two different forms of the verb. The first interpretation of the doubling refers to two rivers—divine overflow from above enabling prophecy, and the Chebar River below. The second explanation indicates that there was a prophecy earlier in the land of Israel, and a subsequent one in the land of the Chaldeans.

On Ezekiel's prophecy in the land of Israel and then in Babylon, see *Targum Yonatan*; Rashi; Radak. On the meaning of *hayoh hayah*, see *Zohar* 1:149a; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 353; above, p. 452, n. 21. On prophecy outside the land of Israel, see above, p. 445, n. 4.

254. ***Ezekiel…*** The first part of the prophet's name is interpreted as a sign of his intended service.

255. ***Son of* בוזי (*Buzi*), *Buzi*…** On this interpretation, cf. above, note 243.

256. **spurned…** Ezekiel was called *son of Buzi* because his spiritual "father," Jeremiah, had been scorned by the

Israelites on account of his messages of rebuke.

See Meroz, “Merkevet Yeḥezqel,” 599, n. 5.

257. **left is restored to the right…** Israel’s sins lead to punishment from the demonic realm, which is signified by “the left.” In Kabbalah, the left side can symbolize either *Gevurah* within Divinity or the side of wickedness. In any case, punishment derives from this dimension; but through repentance, an individual or nation—or even the left side itself—can be restored to harmony within the divine realm.

Abraham descended with holy purpose to the demonic realm, which is represented by Egypt; then he returned spiritually to the south, symbolizing *Ḥesed*. His personal journey reflects the broader dynamic in the *Zohar* of the left’s being contained in the right.

On Abraham’s journey to the demonic realm and then back to *Ḥesed*, see *Zohar* 1:83a–b, 122b. On left as being included in right, see also *Zohar* 1:17a, 119b; 2:26b, 52b, 57a–b, 66a, 162b, 168b–169a, 223a, 231a, 257a (*Heikh*); 3:17b, 24a, 118b, 176a, 178a–b, 236b; *ZḤ* 37d, 44a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; Wolfson, *Luminal Darkness*, 1–29.

Toward the South renders *negbah*—literally *toward the Negev*, referring to the southern region of Canaan. By extension, *negev* also means “south” in biblical Hebrew.

The verse in Exodus according to MT reads: *Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy*. On discrepancies between MT and the *Zohar*’s reading of Scripture, see above, pp. 365–66, n. 136.

258. **reinforced in Judgment…** Both Abraham and Ezekiel received prophecy in connection with the left side before they traveled to the right. Isaac, however, manifests Judgment in the world and so remains steadfast on the left side.

259. **at the end of days…** While the people of Israel suffer in exile presently, at the end of days they will be returned to a rebuilt Jerusalem. In the divine realm,

Shekhinah, who is represented by the city, will likewise depart from the demonic realm, signified by the left, and will again receive divine overflow from the right side.

This verse in Isaiah marks the beginning of the section devoted to the "suffering servant" (52:13–53:12). The identity of this servant was fiercely disputed in medieval Jewish-Christian polemics, with Jews insisting that he symbolized the people of Israel (see Isaiah 41:8; 44:2), whereas Christians maintained that he prefigured Jesus Christ. The *Zohar* here apparently offers a cryptic Messianic interpretation of the time when the moon, signifying *Shekhinah* (also represented here by the *mountain*), will be restored to her full size. See *Zohar* 1:81a–182a; 3:153b, 246b (both *RM*).

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *See, My servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and raised, and be very high*.

260. ***upon me…*** *Shekhinah* had come down to the land of the Chaldeans specifically on account of Ezekiel's distinctive legacy of merit.

The phrase "as it were" deflects the anthropomorphism suggested by *Shekhinah*'s descent; it is belied immediately, though, by the emphasis of the term "actually," which insists upon the immanence of *Shekhinah*, as signified by the *hand of YHVH*.

In MT the verse reads: *the hand of YHVH came upon him*. On discrepancies between Zoharic citations of Scripture and MT, see above, pp. 365–66, n. 136.

261. **arousal of the left side…** The details of Ezekiel's vision are interpreted historically, as references to the punishment coming to the people of Israel. While the "cloud" signifies the right side, representing *Ḥesed* and its influence on *Shekhinah*, the left side is overpowering, as symbolized by the *flashing fire* and the *stormy wind coming from the north*.

For other kabbalistic interpretations of these images from the chariot vision, see Meroz, "Merkevet Yeḥezqel,"

606–7, n. 28; above, p. 454, n. 27.

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of amber, from within the fire*.

262. **shone upon him slightly…** Even though prophecy does not generally occur in exile, the blessed Holy One bestowed Ezekiel with a vision by the Chebar River so that people would not mock his prophetic ability upon his return to the land of Israel.

Though the simple meaning of the text describes the radiance surrounding the entire vision, here the *Zohar* interprets the pronoun לוֹ (*lo*), *it* [or: *him*], as a reference to Ezekiel.

263. ***hand of YHVH…*** *Shekhinah* is represented by the *hand of YHVH*, and She absorbs divine overflow from all the *sefirot* above—specifically *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

264. **thread of love…** is veiled… When Judgment looms, the thread of love from *Ḥesed*, called *great cloud*, is veiled within *Shekhinah*. However, that does not indicate any change within Divinity, who is unchanging. It is only from our limited human perspective that it seems so. This guarantees God's eternal commitment to the people of Israel, even when God's love is concealed.

On the "thread of love," see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, *Avodah Zarah* 3b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13, pp. 254–55; *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 17, p. 22; *Midrash Mishlei* 31:15; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Talmud Torah* 3:13; *Zohar* 1:82b, 92a, 104a, 178b, 194b, 207b; 2:46a, 57a, 149a; 3:22a, 23b, 25a–b, 36a, 44a–b, 64b–65a, 68a, 76a, 213a; *ZḤ* 69d (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 54. On the verse from Malachi, see Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:11; *Zohar* 2:176a; 3:138a.

265. ***From within it…*** Here the pronoun *it* refers to the stormy wind, as opposed to the more immediate antecedents of the *flashing fire* or the *radiance*.

Cf. *Targum Yonatan*, Joseph Qara, and Radak on the verse; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 357.

266. **holy angels…** Although the text calls them *creatures*, they were actually angels—and this is proven by their similarity to *Adam*. Here *Adam* refers to the anthropomorphic image of *Shekhinah* when manifesting *Ḥesed*. She rides upon the chariot carried by those angels.

See *Aggadat Bereshit* 38:2.

267. **each creature could face the south…** Each of the creatures had four faces so that they could turn readily toward whichever direction was being manifested by the dominant *sefirah* at the time. The human face points toward the south, representing *Ḥesed*; the lion on the east symbolizes *Tif'eret*; the bull faces west, signifying *Shekhinah*; and the eagle heads northward, representing *Gevurah*.

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *The image of their face was a human face; and on the right the four of them had a lion's face; and on the left the four of them had a bull's face; and the four of them had an eagle's face*.

268. **the north side within was obscure…** When Ezekiel gazed upon the chariot, the southern face—that of *Adam*, manifesting *Ḥesed*—was predominant, and so he could not see precisely whether the face on the northern side was that of an eagle or a serpent. The verse names the place of the lion and bull, but not the eagle—prompting reflection on the location of the eagle. The indeterminacy of the northern face—eagle or serpent—arises from the fact that its appearance is contingent upon the virtue of the people of Israel. If they are righteous, the northern face appears as an eagle; if undeserving, it appears as a serpent, manifesting the demonic aspect of judgment. There is no serpent mentioned in Ezekiel's vision, but the author engages in wordplay, based on the similarity of the words *nesher* ("eagle"), and *nashar* ("stripped away"). The eagle's power can be withdrawn if Israel's behavior is displeasing to God.

On the dialectical imagery of eagle and serpent, see *ZḤ* 30b.

269. **This eagle is in the place of Jacob…** This is an additional explanation of the convergence of eagle and serpent. While the eagle is associated with compassion and the *sefirah Tif'eret*, represented by Jacob and *heavens*, the *Zohar* asserts that this is also the place of the constellation called *Teli*. The reference to *Teli* is oblique, but it probably refers to the malevolent constellation Draco that will ultimately be punished at the end of days, as suggested in Isaiah 27:1: *On that day YHVH will punish—with His fierce, great, mighty sword—Leviathan the elusive snake, Leviathan the writhing snake, and He will slay the Dragon in the sea*. The blessed Holy One, represented by Jacob, sets the eagle in the north, symbolizing Judgment; He does so in order to protect *Shekhinah*—called here "place of Jacob" and "Temple of Jacob"—from the serpent, which is signified by *teli*.

The serpentine constellation Draco ("Dragon") extends more than halfway around the northern circumpolar sky. See Shabbetai Donnolo's description in *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, on *Sefer Yetsirah* 6 (cited in Sharf, *The Universe of Shabbetai Donnolo*, 182): "Who is the *teli*? When God created the sky above us, divided into seven heavens, He created the *teli*, dragon, out of fire and water in the form of a great serpent, like a great, writhing snake. He gave it a head and a tail and placed it in the fourth heaven—the middle one, abode of the sun—and He stretched it from one end to the other like a bar, like a writhing snake… extended like a circular ring; and all the stars, luminaries, and constellations are attached to it. As threads of warp and woof are attached to a weaver's beam, so all the stars in the seven heavens above and below are attached to it, along with the two luminaries and the twelve zodiacal signs, while it is appointed to be king over them all, to rule them whether for good or for evil.… It is not perceptible to the eye. It is

rather through the learning handed down by ancient books that we can get to know the *teli*, its power, its rule, how it was created, its goodness and its malignancy." Later in the same passage, Donnolo identifies *Teli*, "Draco," with *naḥash bariaḥ, the elusive snake*.

The word *teli* may derive from the Syriac *atalu*, "eclipse," though it is possible that it derives from the Hebrew *talah*, "hang," inasmuch as it is said to be the constellation that directs planetary movements. See also Sharf, *The Universe of Shabbetai Donnolo*, 40, 135, n. 26.

On the eagle and Jacob, see *Zohar* 2:80b. On the *teli*, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 6:2; *Sefer Mazzalot*; *Bahir* 75 (106); *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*), 125a; 2:35a–b; Gikatilla, *Sod ha-Naḥash u-Mishpato* (quoted in Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape*, 79); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:607; Sharf, *The Universe of Shabbetai Donnolo*, 33–51, 182–85; Kaplan, *Sefer Yetzirah*, 231–39. On Jacob's shrewdness, see above, note 34.

270. ***Adam* is in the south...** *Adam* represents *Ḥesed* and is located in the south, but sometimes He descends toward *Shekhinah* in the west, bestowing a thread of love upon Her. At other times *Shekhinah*, signified by *Adonai*, ascends to unite with *Ḥesed* on the right side. Thus the author decodes the verse as follows: *Tif'eret's utterance to Shekhinah: 'Sit with Ḥesed.'*

This appears to continue the oblique referencing of the Messianic era, and the turning toward *Shekhinah* may represent a promise of ultimate redemption, further alluded to in the continuation of the verse from Psalms: *Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies your footstool*.

On the "thread of love," see above, note 264. The simple sense of the full verse in Psalms reads: *Of David. A Psalm. YHVH's utterance* לאדני (*ladoni*), *to my lord: 'Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.'* On the connection of this verse to Abraham (symbol of *Ḥesed* in Kabbalah), see BT *Nedarim* 32b (and cf. 32a, which

includes an anti-astrological message); Rashi; Ibn Ezra; Radak.

271. **The bull dwells in the west…** This is the place of *Shekhinah*. To implement judgment in the world, She rises up to the source of Judgment in the north, which symbolizes *Gevurah*. Such intermingling occurs throughout the sefirotic structure as an expression of the dynamic unity of Divinity.

Cf. Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 68.

272. **[*ZḤ* 31a]** The following short homily appears only in the printed editions.

273. ***I am YHVH your God*** Thus begins the preamble to the Ten Commandments (or according to some opinions, the start of the first commandment). The full verse reads: *I am YHVH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of a house of slaves*. See below at note 279.

274. **Rabbi Yeisa the Younger…** On Rabbi Yeisa's young age, see *Zohar* 1:162a; 2:79b, 153a; *ZḤ* 85c (*MhN, Rut*).

275. **reminds Israel in each and every place…** Rabbi Yeisa the Younger wonders what is so remarkable about God's freeing the Israelites from bondage in Egypt—after all, this is just fulfilling His promise to Abraham!

Rabbi Yeisa's question about the pervasive references to the Exodus derives from an enumeration according to which there are fifty instances in which God says to remind Israel of the Exodus. See next note.

"Reminds" renders מדכר (*madkar*), related to the Hebrew root זכר (*zkhr*), which can mean "to remind, remember," but also "to mention, say, utter."

The context in Genesis (15:13–14) reads: *He said to Abram, 'Know well that your seed will be strangers in a land not theirs, and they will be enslaved and afflicted four hundred years. But upon the nation that they serve I will bring judgment; and afterward they will go forth with great substance.'* On this homily, see Yisraeli, *Pitḥei Heikhal*, 184–87.

276. **The blessed Holy One assured Abraham only…** Rabbi Shim’on answers Rabbi Yeisa’s question by pointing to the limitation inherent in God’s promise to Abraham. The blessed Holy One had promised only to release them from their physical slavery, but on account of His love He provided spiritual redemption as well.

The Exodus itself is referred to more than fifty times in the Torah but—according to one enumeration—there are fifty instances in which God instructs Moses to remind Israel of the Exodus. Rabbi Shim’on explains further that these numerous iterations of the Exodus correspond to the forty-nine levels of the impurity into which the people of Israel had sunk during their sojourn in Egypt. God elevated them from their depravity to holiness.

The trope of “forty-nine gates of understanding” is based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu’el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): “Fifty gates of understanding were created in the world; and all were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6).”

On the multiple iterations of the Exodus, see *Zohar* 1:261b (*Hash*); 2:83b–84a, 85b; 3:262a; *TZ* 6, 22a; 30, 74b; 32, 76b; 39, 79b; Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim* 13:1–2; *Nitsotsei Zohar* on *Zohar* 2:85b, n. 2; ibid., in *ZḤ*, 124b–d; Vol. 4, p. 466, n. 359. On the fifty gates of understanding, see above, note 197. On the forty-nine powers of impurity, see *Zohar* 2:146a (*ST*).

277. **we count from the festival day of Passover…** The Torah enjoins that Israel should count seven weeks from *Pesaḥ* to *Shavu’ot*—namely the forty-nine days of the Omer; this period corresponds to Israel’s emergence from impurity while in Egypt until its purification at Mount Sinai, where they stood to receive the Torah.

On the counting of weeks and days, see BT *Ḥagigah* 17b, in the name of Abbaye: “It is a commandment to count days, as is written: *Until the morrow of the seventh sabbath*

[or: *week*], *you shall count fifty days* (Leviticus 23:16); and it is also a commandment to count weeks, as is written: *Seven weeks you shall count for yourself* (Deuteronomy 16:9); and further, it is written: *The festival of weeks* [*Shavu'ot*]" (Deuteronomy 16:10)."

278. **[41b]** The intervening text comprises the following: relatively late material from *Tiqqunei Zohar* (31a–35b) that is not included in this translation; 35b–37c from *Raza de-Razin*, which is translated above on pages 336–69; and 37c–41a, featuring an untitled commentary on Ezekiel's chariot, translated above on pages 443–502.

279. **a single utterance…** Following a midrashic tradition, the *Zohar* reads the biblical text hyperliterally to mean that God spoke *all these words*—meaning all Ten Commandments—in a single utterance. According to another rabbinic tradition, God declared directly to Israel only the first two of those commandments: *I am YHVH your God*… and *You shall have no other gods beside Me*… (the only ones stated in the first person). *Tanḥuma* and Rashi apply Psalms 62:11 (*One thing has God spoken, two have I heard*) to these first two commandments, implying that God spoke both of them simultaneously, though they were heard by Israel individually. Here, the question is raised about the uniqueness of the first claim and then of both claims—are there not other instances in which the blessed Holy One made two utterances at once?

On all Ten Commandments as being spoken simultaneously, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 8; *Baḥodesh* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 15:11; 20:1; *Sifrei*, Numbers 42, 102, 111; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 11; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:7. According to the Masoretic paragraphing, these two statements are both part of the same commandment, but a number of rabbinic sources treat them as the first two of the Ten Commandments. On these two commandments as the first two of the Ten Commandments, and on their being spoken simultaneously, see *Tanḥuma, Vayelekh* 2; *Pirqei de-*

Rabbi Eli'ezer 41; Rashi on BT *Makkot* 23b–24a, s.v. *mi-pi ha-Gevurah*; *Zohar* 2:81b.

The printed editions introduce this material on *parashat Yitro* with the words "More from *parashat Yitro*," so the editors, apparently, did not view the following material as a continuation of the dialogue between Rabbi Yeisa and Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai. Indeed, it is unclear whether the "dialogue" occurs between two people, or if it is internal. This translation treats it as coming from a single speaker.

Rabbi Natan Shapira contends that this material belongs at the end of the chapter *Qav ha-Middah*, but that position is not attested in the manuscripts. See *Zohar Ḥadash*, ed. Shapira (Munkacz, 1911), 96a.

280. **essential principle of all…** The simultaneous utterance of the first two commandments (*I am* and *You shall have no*) corresponds to an essential duality that comprises paradoxically the unity of all, and these are the male and female potencies that constitute Divinity. These two commandments correspond to the two different versions of the commandment regarding the Sabbath—which, according to rabbinic teaching, were also spoken simultaneously.

The first version of the Ten Commandments reads: זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Exodus 20:8). The second version reads: שמור (*Shamor*), *Guard, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Deuteronomy 5:12). According to Kabbalah, *zakhor* alludes to זכר (*zakhar*), "male," signifying the male divine potency, whereas the alternative formulation, *shamor*, signifies the female, *Shekhinah*. Further, *zakhor* implies the 248 positive commandments of Torah (since time-bound positive commandments are said to be incumbent only on men), while *shamor* alludes to the 365 negative commandments (incumbent on women as well)—together totaling 613 commandments. Here, the first two of the Ten Commandments are mapped onto *zakhor* and *shamor*.

On the two versions of the Sabbath commandment as including all of the positive and negative commandments, see *TZ* 22, 63b–64a. Cf. *Bahir* 32 (49). On the pairing of these two sets of commandments, see *Zohar* 2:91a.

On *remember* and *guard* as being spoken simultaneously, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 7; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 20:8; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 5:12; JT *Nedarim* 3:2, 37d; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 27a. On *remember* and *guard* as male and female, see *Bahir* 124 (182); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 496–97; Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:8; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Sefer ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 420; *Zohar* 1:5b, 47b, 48b, 164b, 199b, 248a; 2:70b, 92a (*Piq*), 92b, 138a, 165b; 3:81b, 92b (*Piq*), 115b, 224a; *ZḤ* 85a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 118; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110; Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 63–71. Cf. *ZḤ* 44a.

281. **single utterance and not two…** According to the verse in Psalms (quoted above, note 279), only one utterance emerged, though it was received as two—indicating the inseparability of each of the two pairs of fundamental principles: male and female; positive and negative commandments. Moreover, all the *sefirot*, signified by "voices" (or "sounds, thunderings") were comprised within that single utterance. Yet, according to a rabbinic tradition, the people of Israel heard only the first two of the Ten Commandments, construed here as one. The *Zohar* infers that they merely *saw* the rest; they could not hear them since they were whispered. The distinction in the verse between *God spoke all these words* and *saying* is what conveys the gap between the utterances heard and those whispered. After the people kissed the divine utterance—implying their devotion and commitment to obedience—the commandments were expounded.

On Israel's hearing only the first two of the Ten Commandments directly from God, see BT *Makkot* 23b–24a,

Horayot 8a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 41; *Tanḥuma, Vayelekh* 2; *Shemot Rabbah* 33:7; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 20:14. On the whispered commandments, see *Bahir* 32 (49). On these kisses, cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:3; *Zohar* 2:146a.

The full verse from Exodus reads: *All the people saw the thunderings* [or: *voices*], *and the flashes and the sound* [or: *voice*] *of the shofar and the mountain smoking, and the people saw and trembled and they stood at a distance*.

282. ***God spoke all these words...*** The entirety of the Ten Commandments comprises the unified principle that is expressed in these two pairs of commandments.

283. **mystery of the throne...** The *gimatriyyah* of the word אנכי (*anokhi*), *I*, equals 81, which is the same as that of כסא (*kisse*), "throne." This correspondence might lead one to conclude that *anokhi* signifies the divine throne and the feminine *Shekhinah*. However, the author emphasizes that ultimately the union of the male and female potencies within God comprise a male androgynous Divinity, in which the female is subsumed within the male.

On the *gimatriyyah* of *anokhi* and *kisse*, see *Zohar* 2:91a; *TZ* 21, 56a; 22, 64a. On Divinity as a male androgyne, see above, p. 404, n. 88; p. 463, n. 51. See also *ZḤ* 41c. Cf. Vol. 4, p. 519, n. 554.

284. **אני (*Ani*), *I*...** The word אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I*, can be understood as composed of two elements: אני (*ani*), "I," and the letter כ (*kaf*), which stands for כתר (*keter*), "crown." Usually in the *Zohar* the word *ani* designates *Shekhinah*, and *kaf* represents *Binah*. Here, however, *ani* signifies *Yesod* and *kaf* symbolizes *Shekhinah*—the lower crown, the female principle contained within the male, in the totality represented by the word *anokhi*. *Shekhinah* is also known by the term *atarah*, a synonym for crown, which corresponds to the corona of the divine phallus, called *Yesod*; here, *Keter* refers to this lower crown rather than the uppermost *sefirah*.

On *Shekhinah* as the corona, completing *Yesod*, see Vol. 11, p. 390, n. 103. On *keter*, cf. *Sullam*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On *kaf* in relation to *Binah*, see *Zohar* 2:91a, 123a.

285. **mystery of *vav*...** The letter *vav* in the tetragrammaton represents *Tif'eret*, the masculine aspect of Divinity, to whom *Guard*, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, approaches. Once they are united inseparably, the totality of Divinity is known through the immanence of *Shekhinah*, as expressed by Her name *Guard*. The "house" may be a reference to the Temple, the site where God will be worshiped in a redeemed era—and as such also signifies *Shekhinah*.

Anokhi has a masculine identity in the first set of Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1–14), defined by *Remember*; and it has a feminine identity in the second set (Deuteronomy 5:6–18), defined by *Guard*.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Scarcely had I passed them, when I found the one my soul loves. I held him, and would not let him go until I brought him to my mother's house, to the chamber of the one who conceived me*.

286. ***Anokhi*—mystery of mysteries...** The word *Anokhi* is reconceived as a series of letters that manifest first as a unity. Then the *Botsitsa*, also known as the *Botsina de-Qardinuta*, "Spark (or Lamp) of Adamantine Darkness," delineates the dimensions first of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, and then of the remaining *sefirot*, with symmetrical luminous displays accompanying each emanation.

The *Botsitsa* or *Botsina de-Qardinuta* in the *Zohar* is the luminous, invisible, divine instrument emerging from *Ein Sof* that "measures"—and in so doing, it gives scale, shape, light, color, and (eventually) permanence to the *sefirot* below. See the Zoharic section entitled *Qav ha-Middah*, translated above, pp. 414–42, and especially nn. 1–2 there.

On the number "seventy-one," the editors of Venice noted: "Further investigation is required to determine if it should read 'seventy-two, with 288 sparkles.'" The *gimatriyyah*

of the word חסד (*Ḥesed*) is seventy-two, which makes the number substitution cohere better with the sense of the paragraph. See *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

287. **Afterward the *Botsitsa* spiraled...** In this next stage of emanation, the movements of the sparks are circular and spiraling, rather than linear as before. The trajectory is from the south to the east to the north—signifying *Ḥesed, Tif'eret*, and *Gevurah*. Only the last is encircled, mitigating its potentially harsh influences.

For a different explanation of this paragraph, see *Matoq mi-Devash*.

288. **smelting silver and gold...** The *Zohar* frequently uses the image of smelting to describe the process of purification of the *sefirot*, a process that removes any impurities—aspects of the demonic realm—that have lodged within Divinity. Here, it is the letters of אנכי (*Anokhi*) that undergo this refinement.

On the alchemical symbolism of smelting, see Scholem, *Alchemy and Kabbalah*, 38–40; Vol. 11, p. 613, n. 32.

289. **When the letters shot out...** Ultimately, all the letters of the Ten Commandments—starting in the most ethereal realms—flew through the air, finding their earthly stations upon the tablets that Moses received at Sinai.

290. **one letter...** The *Zohar* ascribes gender to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. When the letters of the Ten Commandments journeyed toward the tablets, they proceeded in gendered groupings of male and female. The letter *vav* is the third letter of the tetragrammaton and represents the central axis of the middle six *sefirot* (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*); it also serves as the bridge between the upper and lower realms within the *sefirot*. Written as a single line, *vav* appears (or is "engraved") within virtually all of the letters.

On gendering of letters, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 3:5–8; *Bahir* 56–58 (83–86); *ZḤ* 66c–d, 74c–d (both *ShS*); Wolfson, "Dimmui Antropomorphi," 173–75.

291. **את הקולות (*et ha-qolot*), *the sounds…*** This interpretation depends upon the tiny word את (*et*), which is technically an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. Already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. In the *Zohar*, the word את (*et*) is often a name of *Shekhinah*, who comprises the totality of divine speech—the entire alphabet from א (*alef*) to ת (*tav*). Here, the interpretation of the particle את (*et*) may be further extended by vocalizing it as *at*, "letter." The juxtaposition of *et* and *ha-qolot, the sounds* (or *the voices*), enables the equation of letters and sounds.

On *et*, see above, note 138. Cf. the Christian parallel in Revelation 1:8: "I am *alpha* and *omega*."

292. **ואת (*Ve-et*), *And the, sound of the shofar…*** All letters issue from *Binah*, symbolized by *shofar*; and *Tif'eret*, represented by *vav*, is the stylus that engraves all the letters—themselves a symbol for *Shekhinah*. The letter *vav* also serves as a prefixed word—*ve*—meaning *and*. In the *Zohar* the word קול (*qol*), *sound* (or *voice*), frequently serves as a symbol for *Tif'eret*. Thus the phrase *and the sound of the shofar* is code for the string of *Shekhinah, Tif'eret*, and *Binah*. What the people of Israel saw were the letters—alluded to by the term *sound*—that emerged from that chain of *sefirot*. Alternatively, the author reads the verse as ו את קול השופר (*vav at qol ha-shofar*), *vav is the letter of the voice of the shofar*; that is, the letter *vav* is identified with *voice of the shofar*, both of whose terms represent *Tif'eret*.

The blending of senses conveyed by the phrase *All the people saw the sounds*—which modern scholarship calls "synesthesia"—is the Bible's way of indicating the miraculous and awesome nature of the Israelites' experience of the revelation. On synesthesia in Jewish mysticism, see Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines*, 160, 287–88.

293. **they heard only a single קול (*qol*), voice…** When revelation is described in terms of the sense of hearing (in Deuteronomy 4), the word *qol* (*voice, sound*) is written in the singular, as only one utterance was heard—a *voice of words*. That singularity may refer to *Shekhinah* or, alternatively, to the unified pair of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

294. **seeing through a crystal…** The quality of the people of Israel's visionary experience was limited and mediated: seeing light in a derivative and oblique form. This is the meaning of the scriptural insistence that they did not see a true image of the blessed Holy One.

"Crystal" renders עששיתא (*ashashita*), "glass; glass lantern." On the *ashashita*, see *Targum*, Song of Songs 5:14; *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:12 (and Theodor's note); *Tanhuma, Va'era* 14; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8; *Zohar* 1:33b and *Derekh Emet*; 2:23a, 82a, 130b, 186b, 221a; *ZḤ* 63b (*ShS*), 122b (*Mat*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 97 (124); Ben-Yehuda, *Millon*, s.v. עששית (*ashashit*); Vol. 4, p. 80, n. 36.

295. **Through those letters they saw and heard…** When the male potency of Divinity, *Tif'eret*, knocks (or "strikes") *Shekhinah*—designated by "Speech"—the letters of the word *Anokhi* issue forth, and they are witnessed visually and aurally by the people of Israel. These letters then are analogous to the medium of "crystal" mentioned above, and the word *Anokhi* is now conceptualized as the fusion of male and female aspects of Divinity. The Israelites' experience was not passive; rather it was through their acts of gazing and listening that the letters of the word אנכי (*Anokhi*) aggregated to become that word, susceptible to being seen and heard. The verse from Deuteronomy is interpreted to mean that *Tif'eret*, represented by *voice*, shapes words—in this case, the particular word *Anokhi*.

296. **mystery of כלל (*kelal*), general principle…** The author continues his binary interpretations of the pair of terms *Anokhi* and *YHVH your God*, and of the other pair

remember and *guard*, by applying the rabbinic hermeneutical rule of כלל ופרט (*kelal u-frat*), "general principle and particular." Here, those two categories map onto the transcendent male *Tif'eret* and the immanent female *Shekhinah*, respectively. The Torah's grandeur appears as this unification of opposites: male and female; positive and negative commandments (as alluded to by *remember* and *guard*); general principle and particular; Torah and commandments. But in fact the entirety is comprised within the Male, *Tif'eret*, and expressed by the one word *Anokhi*.

The original formulation of the rabbinic hermeneutical rule of "general" and "particular" concerns "a generalization that requires a specification" and "a specification that requires a generalization."

The Book of King Solomon is one of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the authors of the *Zohar*. See the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a; "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*… have been lost on account of our numerous sins in the wanderings of exile, and nothing remains of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*."

On the hermeneutical rule of general principle and particular, see *Sifra*, introduction, 9, 2b–c. Cf. *Zohar* 1:16b, 47b, 246b; 2:3a, 161b, 176a–b, 178a (*SdTs*); 3:264a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 335–36; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 107–8. On everything being contained in the Male, see above, note 283.

For other references to the Book of Solomon, see *Zohar* 1:7b, 13b, 225b; 2:67a, 70a (*RR*), 125a, 139a, 172a, 204b; 3:10b, 65b, 70b, 78b, 104a, 151b, 164a, 193b, 263b (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 12b (*MhN*). Naḥmanides several times refers to, and quotes from, an Aramaic version of the Apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon* that is no longer extant. See the introduction to his *Commentary on the Torah*, 5–6; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:163, 182. On the numerous scientific and magical books attributed to King Solomon, see *Old Testament*

Pseudepigrapha, 1:956–57. For a catalogue of these arcane books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

297. **אנכי (*Anokhi*)—א י (*alef yod*)...** The word *Anokhi* is interpreted through the method of *notariqon*—breaking down the term in question into its presumed component parts. The two identified pairs of the word's letters signify respectively the male and female potencies of Divinity. Furthermore, as the word *Anokhi*, *I*, comprises both male and female, so does its synonym *Ani*, on account of its containing the male pair א י (*alef yod*) and the female medial *nun*.

On the medial ("bent") *nun* as a symbol of *Shekhinah*, see *Bahir* 56 (83); *Zohar* 1:147a (*Tos*); 2:91a, 139a, 215a, 235b; 3:66b, 155a; *ZḤ* 41c, 70a (*ShS*). On *kaf* as feminine, see above, note 284.

298. **Why did it employ *Anokhi* and not *Ani*?...** Since the two terms are identical, why did the Torah choose one over the other? Here the letter *nun* symbolizes *Binah* on account of its value in *gimatriyyah* of fifty—alluding to the fifty gates of understanding that exist in *Binah*. She is referred to sometimes as Upper *Shekhinah*, paralleling the *kaf* that represents *Shekhinah*.

In the Bible the two words are parallel formations, with *Anokhi* being strengthened by the addition of the demonstrative element, corresponding to the word כה (*koh*), "here." They are often used interchangeably, sometimes determined by rhythmical considerations.

On the association of the number fifty with *Binah*, see above, note 197.

299. ***Anokhi*... *Yod*...** The four letters of the word אנכי (*Anokhi*) correspond to the four letters of the tetragrammaton. The *yod* at the end corresponds to the *yod* of *YHVH*, called "beginning" and representing *Ḥokhmah*. As noted above, the letters *nun* and *kaf* designate the two *he*s of the tetragrammaton, themselves symbolizing *Binah* and *Shekhinah*, also called Upper World and Lower World. The central shaft of the letter א (*alef*) is written like a *vav*, third

letter of the tetragrammaton, signifying *Tif'eret* and the other *sefirot* (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*) that surround it. Thus the word *Anokhi*, the first word of the Ten Commandments, is a manifestation of God's name, and thus of the entirety of Divinity and Torah.

On the two females, see *Bahir* 116 (171). On Torah as God's Name, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, in *Kitvei Ramban* 1:548; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 37; *Zohar* 2:55b, 60a, 87a, 90b, 124a, 161b; 3:13b, 19a, 21a, 35b–36a, 61a, 71a–73a, 76a, 80b, 89b, 98b, 159a, 176a, 265b, 298b; *ZḤ* 75c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 341–42; Scholem, On *the Kabbalah*, 37–44; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1085–86; Idel, "Tefisat ha-Torah"; Wolfson, "The Glorious Name and the Incarnate Torah." Cf. Naḥmanides, introduction to *Commentary on the Torah*, 6–7; idem, "Torat ha-Shem Temimah," in *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:167–68.

300. **complete name engraved upon Israel…** Before God created Adam, there was no one to whom *your God* could be addressed. Nevertheless, the compound name *YHVH Elohim* (Genesis 2:5) called "complete name," was applied to the world to indicate its consummation. At the moment of revelation at Sinai, the people of Israel manifested the apex of humanity and thus were crowned with a personalized form of the "complete name," *YHVH your God*. There was no one fit before that time.

On the presence of the consummate name within the perfected human being, Judah Halevi writes in the *Kuzari* (4:15): "Penetrating light is like the name *YHVH*, a specific and unique name, that instructs about the relationship between God and His most consummate creatures on the face of the earth. These are none other than the prophets—whose purified souls receive His light, which passes through them like the light of the sun through bdellium and rubies.… The God of these men of the heart is exclusively *YHVH*, but after the cleaving of the name *Elohim* to the human,

there was an exchange after the completion of the creation, yielding *YHVH Elohim*. This is like the teaching of our sages: ‘It is called a complete name over a complete world.’ Thus the fullness of the world occurs only with the creation of the human—the heart of all that preceded him.” Cf. ibid. 4:3.

On the name יהוה אלהים (*YHVH Elohim*) as the full name of God, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3; 12:15; *Zohar* 1:12a; 2:260a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 67a, 73a (both *ShS*).

301. **glory of Israel…** Moses was the paragon of Israel; and when he uttered the words *YHVH Eloheinu, our God*, he had other elite figures with him—his brother and sons. More than anyone else, he was fit to call *YHVH* “my God,” and yet by saying *our God* he included the entire nation.

302. **ם (final *mem*)—sealed…** Israel’s acceptance of the Torah caused the final *mem*—representing *Binah*—at the end of the word אלהים (*Elohim*) to be opened up, thus allowing the Torah concealed within to descend and crown the people. Simultaneously, the lines that form ם (final *mem*) are reshaped into ך (final *kaf*) of אלהיך (*Eloheikha*), *your God*. The orthography of final *kaf* with its downward extension symbolizes the transmission of Torah from *Binah* to the realms below, just as the change from *God* to *your God* transforms the relation of Israel and the blessed Holy One. The *Zohar* adds that final *nun*, which like final *kaf* also has a downward extension, is equal to the doubled measure of the medial *nun*—which signifies *Shekhinah*. Consequently, final *nun* symbolizes the union of the masculine and feminine within Divinity. The section concludes by observing that the totality of the Ten Commandments were an expression of that mystery of unification as expressed in the phrase *voice of words*.

On the esoteric nature of the ם (final *mem*), see BT *Shabbat* 104a. On final *mem* as symbolizing *Binah*, see *Zohar* 1:34b; 2:127a–b, 135a, 180a; 3:66b, 156b, 285b; *ZḤ* 5c (*SO*), 38c, 72b–d (*ShS*). On ן (final *nun*) as symbolizing the union of male and female, see *Bahir* 56 (83); *Zohar* 1:18b–

19a, 147a (*Tos*); 3:155a, 156b, 285b; *ZḤ* 70a (*ShS*). Cf. *ZḤ* 38c and *Nitsotsei Zohar*, ad loc., n. 3. On נ (*nun*) as a symbol of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 297. On the two forms of the letter *nun*, see *Bahir* 56 (83).

On the inclusion of all of Israel with (or within) Moses, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1, 9; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1, 13; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 11:25; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:15; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 10; *Zohar* 2:47a, 191b; 3:9a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 207; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 378. Cf. *Zohar* 3:260b.

303. **When a person rises early in the morning...** As he leaves his home to go to synagogue for weekday morning worship, four angels escort him. The proclamation "Give honor to the image of the Holy King!" alludes to the idea that the human being is created in God's image. Here it may also allude to the tradition that God Himself puts on tefillin. The phrase "son of the King" may refer to the idea that the Jewish soul is engendered by the union of King *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

Traditionally, one who puts on tefillin has already donned the tallit ("a wrap of *mitsvah*"), although the sequence here implies the reverse. Furthermore, Jewish law enjoins that one should first don the tefillin of the hand and then the tefillin of the head, suggesting that the entire sequence here follows a descending rank of holiness rather than the actual order of the rite.

The phrase "tefillin with the holy insignia on his arm" may refer to the fact that the knot formed by the strap passed through this *tefillah* (phylactery) is shaped like the letter י (*yod*), the first letter of *YHVH*. By putting on tefillin, their wearer is glorified. Furthermore, this act displays the Name *YHVH*, whose four letters correspond to the four compartments of the *tefillah* (phylactery) of the head.

The verb "escort" renders אוזפי (*ozefei*), which in normal Aramaic means "lend." Meanwhile, in Hebrew the verb להלוות (*le-halvot*), "to lend," is a homonym of *le-halvot*, "to

escort.” Here the *Zohar*—either playfully or mistakenly—likewise employs the Aramaic verb לאוזפא (*le-ozafa*) in this latter sense.

On the sequence of donning tallit and tefillin, see *Zohar* 3:81a, 175b, 265a; Joseph Caro, *Beit Yosef, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 25:1–2; Ḥayyim Yosef David Azulai, *Birkei Yosef, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 25:4; *Matoq mi-Devash*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 45–46. Cf. *Zohar* 3:120b. On the mystical significance of tefillin, see Vol. 11, pp. 391–94, nn. 106–13. On the notion that God Himself wears tefillin, see BT *Berakhot* 6a. On tefillin as פאר (*pe’er*), “glory,” see JT *Mo’ed Qatan* 3:5, 82d; BT *Berakhot* 11a, 16b; *Sukkah* 25b, *Mo’ed Qatan* 15a, all of which quote Ezekiel 24:17: פארך (*Phe’erekha*), *Your turban* [interpreted as *Your glory*], *put on*.

According to a rabbinic tradition, two angels accompany a person every day. See BT *Shabbat* 119b, *Ta’anit* 11a, *Ḥagigah* 16a, based on Psalms 91:11: *For His messengers* [or: *angels*] *He will command for you, to guard you on all your ways*. Cf. *Berakhot* 60b, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *hitkabbedu*. See *Zohar* 1:12b, 144b, 165b; 2:106b, 239a; 3:52b, 265a; *ZḤ* 47a (*MhN, Rut*), 48d, 84d (*MhN, Rut*).

On the proclamation “Give honor to the image…,” see also *Devarim Rabbah* 4:4; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 19; *Midrash Tehillim* 17:8; 55:3; *Zohar* 2:106b, 199a; 3:52b, 265a. Cf. *Zohar* 3:160b. On this passage, see *Zohar* 3:265a; [Moses de León?], *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, par. 15. On the authorship of the *Zohar* on *parashat Terumah* as it appears in *Zohar Ḥadash*, see Meroz, “R. Yosef Angelet,” 305, n. 4.

The verse in Isaiah reads: *You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory*.

304. **read the portion of *Bereshit*…** The first day of creation is distinctive and is therefore called *one day*, rather than the ordinal numbering style *first day*, as in the case of the other days of creation. On that day was created the primordial light, which God later stored away for the righteous in the world that is coming. The recital of

passages regarding the sacrifices procures atonement and then, through singing *Pesuqei de-Zimra*, the devotee begins to attach himself to *Shekhinah*, represented by "the Bride." (*Pesuqei de-Zimra*, literally Verses of Song, is the section of the morning prayers consisting largely of selections from Psalms, the biblical book that is traditionally ascribed to King David.)

On the distinctiveness of the first day, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 1:5: "It could not have said *the first day* because the second had not yet been made; the first precedes a second in number or degree… whereas *one* does not imply the existence of a second." See Baḥya ibn Paquda, *Ḥovot ha-Levavot, Sha'ar ha-Yiḥud*, 8; *ZḤ* 9a (*MhN*); Vol. 10, pp. 51–52, n. 160. In terms of the simple sense, however, the phrase *one day* arguably means the same as *first day*, for the biblical text often uses *one* as equivalent to *first*; see, e.g., Genesis 2:11; 8:5, 10:25.

On the hiding away of the primordial light, see Vol. 11, p. 193, n. 478.

On reciting the biblical passages regarding the sacrifices, see BT *Megillah* 31b: "Abraham then said before Him, 'Master of the Universe, *how shall I know* [*that I will inherit it*]? (Genesis 15:8).' He replied, '*Take Me a three-year-old heifer* (ibid., 9).' [Abraham] said before Him, 'Master of the Universe, this works out well when the Temple is standing and offerings can be brought to achieve atonement, but when the Temple will no longer be standing, what will become of them?' He replied, 'have already established for them the order of offerings. Whenever they read those portions, I will deem it as if they sacrificed an offering before Me, and I will pardon them for all of their iniquities.'" See *Zohar* 1:100b–101a (*MhN*).

On the ascent offering as atoning for sinful thoughts, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:3, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "The ascent offering is due only על הירהור הלב (*al hirhur ha-lev*), for sinful imagining [literally: for imagining of

the heart, or mind].” On atonement for evil imagining, see JT *Yoma* 8:9, 45b; *Shevu’ot* 1:6, 33b; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Leviticus 6:2; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 10; *Tetsavveh* 15; *Tsav* 7, 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 13; *Tsav* 9; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 1:4; *Zohar* 1:70a; 2:239b; 3:6a, 9a, 11a, 38a–b, 87a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 54, 263.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *Command Aaron and his sons, saying, ‘This is the teaching of the ascent offering. It is the very ascent offering* [or: *It is that which ascends*] *upon its hearth on the altar all night till morning, and the fire of the altar shall keep burning on it.’*

305. **the prayer recited seated...** This section of the morning service (which includes the *Shema*) follows *Pesuqei de-Zimra* (Verses of Song) and precedes the central prayer, which is recited standing and known as *Amidah* (“Standing”). “Who Forms Light” is the first of two blessings that precede the morning recital of the *Shema*. The *Zohar* associates the Hebrew word קטרת (*qetoret*), “incense,” with the Aramaic root קטר (*qtr*), “to tie, bind”—indicating that the offering of incense unites the *sefirot*; here, the blessing “Who Forms Light” performs a similar function.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Who is this rising from the desert like columns of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense—all sorts of merchant’s powders* [or: *more fragrant with myrrh and frankincense than all the merchant’s powders*]? The subject of the verse is the female lover, and the *Zohar* here interprets its successive images as stages of the adornment of *Shekhinah* as a result of the individual’s prayers.

On incense as uniting the *sefirot*, see *Zohar* 1:230a; 2:219a; 3:11a–b, 30a–b, 37b, 58b, 103a, 151b, 177b; *ZḤ* 68a (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 86–87.

306. **They are all beloved...** Love is the next theme in the prayer rite: God’s love for the angels and the Jewish people, and reciprocally from the individual Jew reciting

Shema toward God. The phrase “all beloved…” refers to the angels; it appears in the blessing “Who Forms Light.” Next is the blessing “Abundant Love” that refers to God’s bestowal of the Torah and commandments as signs of His love. Through reciting “Abundant Love,” one attains the rung of *Ḥesed* (Love) on the right. Next the individual recites Deuteronomy 6:4 (“the *Shema*”), which affirms God’s unity; then one reads its accompanying three paragraphs: Deuteronomy 6:5–9, 11:13–21; Numbers 15:37–41.

On “Abundant Love,” see BT *Berakhot* 11b; *Zohar* 3:202b (and *Nitsotsei Zohar*, ad loc., n. 5), 263b (*Piq*).

307. **what is the need for יציב (*yatsiv*)…** There is actually no redundancy here, since the two terms *emet* and *yatsiv* serve different symbolic purposes: *emet* signifies Jacob and *Tif’eret*, while *yatsiv* represents Joseph and *Yesod*. Since Joseph is understood as Jacob’s primary son, and *Yesod* is considered a continuation of *Tif’eret*, both terms are required.

In rabbinic writings, Jacob is commonly associated with truth. In the Bible, in Joseph’s dream of the sheaves, his sheaf is described as נצבה (*nitsavah*), *erect* (Genesis 37:7), related to the word *yatsiv* of the blessing; it is also a fitting descriptor for the divine phallus (*Yesod*), whom Joseph symbolizes. The mystical adept longs to attain each of these rungs and so must recite both of the terms that allude to them. Moreover, since the third paragraph in the *Shema* (Numbers 15:37–41) spoke of the tassels that represent *Shekhinah*—who must be united with the divine male (*Tif’eret* and *Yesod*)—the blessing of *emet ve-yatsiv* stands directly after that paragraph about tassels.

Actually, the root יצב (*ytsv*) can be found in both Aramaic and Hebrew. Moreover, it is usually construed as “erect, firm” rather than “true,” though these two concepts are arguably related.

The rabbis instituted a requirement that one conclude the *Shema* by adding the word *emet* at the end without

interruption, as an affirmation of Jeremiah's assertion that ויהוה אלהים אמת (*va-YHVH Elohim emet*), *And YHVH is the God of truth* (Jeremiah 10:10). See M *Berakhot* 2:2; BT *Berakhot* 14a–b; *Shabbat* 55a; Vol. 11, p. 74, n. 131.

On Jacob as associated with truth, see Micah 7:20: *You give truth to Jacob*. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:14; *Sekhel Tov*, Genesis 31:10; *Zohar* 1:138a–b, 155a (*Mat*), 161a; *ZḤ* 44b; Moses de León, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 46–49, 55–57, 64–67. On *tsitsit* as signifying *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:141a; 3:163b, 174b–175a (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 85a (*MhN Rut*), 101c (*Tiq*); *TZ* 10, 26a; 70, 130b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon* 58, 234, 256; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 70.

308. **why in Aramaic?...** If one were to say "True, true" it would undermine the singularity of truth.

On the avoidance of repeating the word "true," see BT *Berakhot* 14b.

Genesis 25:27 refers to Jacob as תם (*tam*), *without blemish* (or *complete, consummate, simple*).

309. **prayer recited while standing...** The statutory prayer that includes nineteen blessings is often called simply the *Amidah*, "[prayer recited while] standing." Rabbinic tradition refers to its first three blessings as constituting praise. The first such blessing concludes by characterizing God as "Shield of Abraham"; the second concludes "Who resurrects the dead"; and the third ends with "the Holy God."

On the "mystery of the flame and the coal," see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:7: "Ten *sefirot belimah*: their end is embedded in their beginning; their beginning, in their end—like a flame bound to a burning coal." In this instance, the *Zohar* takes the imagery that usually connotes divine unity and applies it to the devotee's mystical union with the blessed Holy One by way of the forty-two-letter name of God.

The first blessing of the *Amidah* is called the "blessing on the right" because of its reference to Abraham—who is

associated with the *sefirah Ḥesed*, which is located on that side of Divinity.

The forty-two-letter name is mentioned in the name of Rav, though not recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. According to Jacob ben Meir Tam (Rabbenu Tam), this name consists of the first forty-two letters of the Torah, from the ב (*bet*) of בראשית (*Be-reshit*), *In the beginning*, through the ב (*vet*) of בהו (*vohu*), *empty* (or *void*) (Genesis 1:2). By this complex divine name, the world came into being. Hai Gaon indicates that the Name of Forty-Two Letters consists of the following letters: אבגיתץ, קרעשטן, נגדיכש, בטרצתג, חקבטנע, יגלפזק, שקוצית, which are also the initial letters of the forty-two words constituting the prayer *Anna be-Khoaḥ* (Please, with the Strength [of Your Right Hand's Greatness]).

On the significance of the first three blessings, see *Zohar* 2:200b, 2601a (*Heikh*). On the worshiper's intention for the first blessing, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 10:1. On the forty-two words in the first blessing, see above, p. 381, n. 27.

A very similar discussion regarding the first three blessings of the *Amidah* appears in Moses de León, *Sefer Maskiyyot Kesef*, 32, in the name of "Commentators."

310. **'Who Resurrects'...** The second blessing of the *Amidah* praises the blessed Holy One for the miraculous promise of resurrection. It contains forty-nine words (including the summer months' addition of the phrase "who causes dew to fall"), thus alluding to the fifty gates associated with *Binah*. The overcoming of death and the destruction of one's enemies are both manifestations of divine might as an expression of love. Although the name *YHVH* generally denotes compassion, divine might derives from its midst, yielding the construct "Powers of *YHVH*."

The author proceeds to derive meaning from an acronym formed from the first letters of the first four words of the second (resurrection) blessing—אגלא (*AGLA*). One method of esoteric manipulation of letters involves the

exchange of the numerical value of a letter for its multiple by ten. Here that entails exchanging the א (*alef*), which equals one, at the beginning, for the letter י (*yod*), equaling ten—yielding the new acronym יגלא (*YGLA*). The term *YGLA* is significant because it can be constructed as an acronym from the first letters of verses of blessing that Jacob gave to Judah (Genesis 49:8–11). Thus those blessings bestowed upon Judah, the ancestor of David—who symbolizes *Malkhut*—manifest the blessing of "the left side" below. This is why the name אדני (*Adonai*), "Lord," is used in this blessing, since it designates *Shekhinah* and Judgment below.

The trope of "fifty gates" derives from a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu'el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): "Fifty gates of *binah*, understanding, were created in the world; and all were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)." For other sources, see above, note 197.

The full blessing that Jacob gives to Judah (Genesis 49:8–11) reads: *Judah, you, will your brothers acclaim—your hand on your enemies' nape—your father's sons will bow to you. A lion's whelp is Judah; from the prey, O my son, you mount. He crouches, lies down like a lion, like the king of beasts—who will arouse him? He binds to the vine his donkey, to the noble vine his ass's foal. He washes in wine his garment, in the blood of grapes his cloak*.

311. **'Holiness' contains fourteen words...** The third blessing of the *Amidah* signifies *Tif'eret*; it consists of fourteen words. These fourteen correspond to the ten utterances with which God created the world plus the four letters of the tetragrammaton, which represents *Tif'eret*. As a result, this blessing expresses the entirety of Divinity.

On the ten utterances, see M *Avot* 5:1. On the version of the blessing that contains fourteen words, see Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 114: "The third blessing… consists of fourteen words, corresponding to the fourteen words in the verse [*Seraphim*] *called to one another, saying* [*Holy,*

holy, holy, is YHVH of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory] (Isaiah 6:3)." See *Maḥazor Vitri*, 66; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Seder Tefillot Kol ha-Shanah*.

312. **last three…** The third- and second-to-last blessings of the statutory prayer respectively signify *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, called "two columns." The last blessing, "Grant Peace," corresponds to *Yesod*, the phallic member of Divinity. See BT *Shabbat* 152a, where Rabbi Shim'on son of Ḥalafta refers to the phallus as "peacemaker of the home."

313. **blessings ordained by the ancient ones…** According to rabbinic tradition, one hundred and twenty members of the Great Assembly established the statutory prayers. See BT *Megillah* 17b.

314. **prostration…** Following the *Amidah*, one recites *Taḥanun* ("Supplication"). This prayer (recited on most weekdays) includes a confession of sins and a petition for grace. Prostration is most propitious at this time, after the spiritual closeness to God that one attains in the course of the *Amidah*. The rite is also known as *nefilat appayim*, "falling upon the face" (or "prostration"), and originally it was recited while in that position. (Later it became customary to recite *Taḥanun* in a seated or half-seated posture, with lowered head and with one's face buried in the bend of the arm.)

On prostration, see JT *Ta'anit* 2:4, 65d; *Avodah Zarah* 4:1, 43d; BT *Ta'anit* 14b, *Megillah* 22a–23a, *Bava Metsi'a* 59b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 5:13–15; *Zohar* 2:128b–129a, 200b, 202b; 3:120b–121a, 176b, 241b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 84–85; Baḥya ben Asher on Numbers 16:22; Jacob ben Asher, *Tur, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 131; Caro, *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim*, 131; Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, 66–70; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:969–71; Fishbane, "The Imagination of Death," 197–204; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 474–85.

315. **one needs to descend below…** After uniting with the source of life through the *Amidah*, one descends to merge

with *Shekhinah*, identified with the Tree of Death. This is a performative sign of the individual's willingness to sacrifice his life for the sake of God's honor.

Here the *Zohar* reflects the Sephardic version of *Taḥanun*, which features Psalm 25, which was composed in acrostic form ("with the alphabet"). The use of the acrostic form is construed as demonstrating complete devotion as it adorns *Shekhinah*.

On *Shekhinah* as the Tree of Death, see *Zohar* 3:157a, 176b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:375–76; cf. *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 5, p. 24.

316. **there is no *vav*...** The acrostic in Psalm 25 is not wholly regular: it excludes the letters *vav* and *qof*, begins two verses with the letter *resh*, and concludes with the letter *pe*. In *Taḥanun*, one symbolically demonstrates one's willingness to die for the sake of God; therefore, the worshiper must fully detach himself from the Tree of Life—signifying *Tif'eret* and represented by *vav* in the tetragrammaton—in order to descend completely to *Shekhinah*. This explains the absence of *vav*.

On the missing letters in the Psalm, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 84–85 (and Wolfson's notes there). On *vav* as a symbol of life, see *Zohar* 1:12b, 33b, 241b; 2:137a; 3:176b.

317. **simulating death...** The key to *Taḥanun* is the sincere willingness to suffer death, and to perform that intention through prostration. The author invokes the analogy of a monkey playing dead when confronted by a predator. The individual praying avoids harsh judgment from *Shekhinah*, represented by the "beast." Psalm 25 omits the letter *qof*, whose name also means "monkey," in order to allude to the analogy, and in particular to the devotion to *Shekhinah* that is exemplified through prostration.

See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 85 (and Wolfson's note).

318. **atonement comes only through death…** The author concludes that this performative enactment of death through *Taḥanun* is an effective substitute for death itself, procuring atonement even for those sins for which death is actually required.

On sins that require death for atonement, see BT *Yoma* 86a: "Of one who has caused desecration of God's name, his repentance has no power to suspend punishment, nor can Yom Kippur atone, nor can suffering absolve. Rather, all these suspend punishment, and death absolves, as is stated: "*Then YHVH Tseva'ot revealed Himself to my ears: This iniquity shall not be purged from you until you die*" (Isaiah 22:14)." See also Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 1:4.

319. **prayer ascends…** After this long ritual sequence, prayer—signifying *Shekhinah*—ascends between the right and left arms above, symbolizing *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* (also represented by *myrrh* and *frankincense*) in loving embrace. This celestial union is the direct result of the devoted individual's prayer.

320. **forty days to learn the Oral Torah…** Moses is described as a midwife who delivers the male Written Torah and female Oral Torah—signifying *Tif'eret* and *Malkhut*, respectively—from the mountain, which represents their mother *Binah*. Written Torah is imagined as the ethereal male upon whose limbs are etched the commandments of Oral Torah; this process is depicted as the developing fetus, during a period the rabbis determined to be forty days long.

To instruct them renders הורתם (*horotam*), but since the word is written in deficient form (without a second *vav* to indicate the second vowel), it can be read as *horatam, conceiving them*—as if referring to *Binah* as the mother in whose womb they gestate.

On Written Torah and Oral Torah, see Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism*, 47–50. On the link between forty days for receiving the Torah and development of the fetus, see BT *Menaḥot* 99b in the names of both Rabbi

Yoḥanan and Rabbi El'azar: "The Torah was given in forty and the soul is formed in forty." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 32:5: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai said, 'They have transgressed the Torah—which was given after forty days—therefore [*I will make it rain*…] *forty days and forty nights* (Genesis 7:4).' Rabbi Yoḥanan said, 'They corrupted the form that was given over forty days, therefore *forty days and forty nights* (ibid.).'"

On the spelling of להורתם (*le-horotam*), see *Midrash Ḥaserot vi-Yterot*, 72 (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:261); *Zohar* 3:40b; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 13:1; 24:12; Recanati on Exodus 24:12, 48d; *Minḥat Shai* on Exodus 24:12. On forty days for fetal development, see M *Niddah* 3:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:12; BT *Berakhot* 60a, *Yevamot* 69b, *Bekhorot* 21b, *Niddah* 30a–b; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 6; Rashi on Genesis 7:4, s.v. *arba'im yom*; Kessler, *Conceiving Israel*, 68–71.

321. **forty days for absorbing supernal light…** According to this interpretation, Moses himself is like the gestating embryo that is shaped and informed over the course of forty days, after which he can serve as a vessel for communicating Torah.

The "supernal light" derives from *Binah*, which is alluded to also through alliteration, via the verb לאתבנאה (*le-itbena'ah*), "to be formed" (or "built, shaped, constructed").

322. **completed above…** Moses received his spiritual consummation during those forty days. He internalized spiritual nourishment from *Binah*, signified by God's "House above"—in contrast to his mother's womb, "the house below." The *fine oil*, which symbolizes the divine emanation that makes Moses' face shine, is associated with the Torah that he learned on Mount Sinai.

Here the *Zohar* draws on the ancient Greek idea that material reality (in this case, the human body) is constructed from the four natural elements (water, fire, air, and dust). Each of these receives influx from the ten *sefirot*

above, thus yielding the number forty as the paradigm for perfecting Moses' soul. In other words, he absorbed heavenly radiance—also called *fine oil*—from *Binah*, which caused his own face to shine. On the four elements, see Vol. 10, p. 31, n. 94.

323. **Moses taught him his lesson…** This section draws obliquely on the imagery of *Idra Rabba* and *Idra Zuta*. Here the author provides a kabbalistic interpretation of Psalms 133:1–2: *Look, how good and how pleasant is the dwelling of brothers, fully together! Like fine oil on the head, running down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron, descending over the collar of his robes*. Moses and Aaron are represented by the two *brothers*; they apparently signify *Arikh Anpin* and *Ze'eir Anpin*. After receiving the Written Torah and Oral Torah, Moses transmitted their radiance—symbolized by "two gemmed droplets"—to Aaron, and they became manifest in his beard. The two Torahs respectively designate *Yesod* (often represented by *Good*), who extends the flow of *Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah* (represented by "the Songs of Israel"). These are called *pleasant* when they express the efflux that comes from *Binah* (who is called World that is Coming).

"Constellation" renders the term מזלא (*mazzala*)—Hebrew מזל (*mazzal*)—which has a wide range of meaning: "constellation, planet, planetary or astrological influence, zodiacal sign, guiding star, guardian angel, destiny, fortune." Here, it apparently refers to the long, flowing body of the beard of the Holy Ancient One—based on the root נזל (*nzl*), "to flow"—from which the glow of two "gems" derives. See Vol. 9, pp. 783–84, n. 50; above, p. 353, n. 99.

On Moses teaching Aaron, see BT *Eruvin* 54b. On Psalms 133:2, see *Zohar* 2:87b; 3:7b–8a, 34a, 39a, 88b, 132b (*IR*), 209a, 295b (*IZ*); Baḥya ben Asher on Numbers 21:19. On the significance of the divine beard, see Giller, *Reading the Zohar*, 118–24; Vol. 8, pp. xii, 346–47. n. 82; 349–50, n. 99.

324. **sacrificial offering…** According to Kabbalah, a primary role of the sacrifices was to unite the *sefirot*. The sign of circumcision (or covenant) refers here to *Shekhinah*, who is called "My *Matronita*"; She is the completion of Aaron's priestly service to God, and She is the link connecting the upper *sefirot* to the world below. "Supernal Mother" and "Prince of Peace" signify *Binah* and *Yesod* respectively; the verse in Malachi joins them—the representatives of upper and lower *sefirot*—to indicate that the blessed Holy One emanates the unity of all the *sefirot* upon Aaron, as manifest in the gems within his beard bearing Torah.

Sefer ha-Bahir 78 (109) first states this principle regarding the sacrifices' role in unification through its interpretation of the word קרבן (*qorban*), "sacrifice": "Why is it called *qorban*? Because the word implies that it הכחות הקדושות מקרב (*meqarev ha-koḥot ha-qedoshot*), draws the holy powers together, as is written: וקרב אותם (*ve-qarav otam*), *Bring them close, to each other* (Ezekiel 37:17)." The following accounts by Azriel of Gerona appear to have influenced the author of the *Zohar*: "It is called *qorban* because it draws the powers together through ascent, blessing them with an addition of spirit" (Vatican MS 211, 8b, as cited in Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:881—with minor modifications). Similarly, "It is also called *qorban* because it draws together the upper powers in a perfect unification. For the Will receives first of all power to ascend from one stage to another, up to the highest level. And then *Tif'eret, Ḥesed*, and *Paḥad* receive power; and as they ascend, the names of the blessed Holy One ascend, uniting together in a perfect unification" (MS Oxford 2456 [Christ Church, 198], 12b, as transcribed in Tishby, ibid.; with minor modifications). See Naḥmanides on Leviticus 1:9; *Zohar* 1:65a; 3:4b–5a, 5b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:878–90.

Malachi 2:1–9 is addressed to the priests of the tribe of Levi, of whom Aaron was the first. The full verse in Malachi reads: *My covenant was with him: life and peace, which I*

gave to him, and of reverence, which he showed Me. For he stood in awe of My name.

325. **a razor upon his beard…** The author engages in wordplay with מורה (*morah*), *razor*, and מורא (*mora*), *reverence*, in conjunction with a rabbinic story. See BT *Karetot* 5b: "The rabbis taught, '*Like fine oil on the head* [*running down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron*] (Psalms 133:2). Two [drops of the oil] were hanging down like gemmed droplets from Aaron's beard.' Rav Kahana said, 'It was taught: When he מספר (*mesapper*), trimmed [his beard], the drops rose, resting by the roots of his beard. This caused anxiety for Moses: "Perhaps, God forbid, I committed sacrilege with the oil of anointing!" But a heavenly voice burst out, saying, "*Like the dew of the Hermon that descends upon the mountains of Zion* (ibid., 3)—as dew is not subject to sacrilege, so the oil that runs down upon the beard of Aaron is not subject to sacrilege." Yet Aaron was still worried: "Although Moses did not commit sacrilege, perhaps I committed sacrilege!" The heavenly voice proclaimed, "*Look, how good and how pleasant is the dwelling of brothers, fully together* (ibid., 1). As Moses did not commit sacrilege, so you too did not commit sacrilege."'" See *Sifra, Millu'im* (*Shemini*) 1:37, 45d–46a; *Zohar* 3:132b (*IR*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:84b.

The verse from Judges contains the instructions to Samson's mother that Samson's hair should never be cut. The *Zohar* here suggests that God was similarly concerned when Aaron's beard was trimmed—perhaps He was not being paid proper reverence, and His name, manifest in the emanation from above, had been profaned, just as Moses and Aaron were anxious that the oil of priestly inauguration might have been profaned. The conclusion from the verse from Malachi demonstrates that in fact Moses (or Aaron) demonstrated appropriate awe of God.

Based on a rabbinic teaching that "The glory of a face is the beard," and on the extended description of the holy

divine beard in *Idra Rabba* (and *Idra Zuta*), kabbalists (and subsequently Hasidim) insisted on not trimming their own beards at all—or even removing a single strand—since the human beard symbolizes the divine beard, each strand of which conveys the flow of emanation.

See Vital, *Sha'ar ha-Mitsvot*, 56b–57a (quoting Isaac Luria); Romanelli, *Massa ba'ray*, 52; Wiener, *Hadrat Panim Zaqan*, 37–46 and passim; Horowitz, "Al Mashma'uyyot ha-Zaqan bi-Qhillot Yisra'el," 137–46; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 313–14. Cf. Sofer, *Ḥatam Sofer, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 1:159; Feinstein, *Iggerot Moshe, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 4:111.

On the beard as glorious, see BT *Shabbat* 152a, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Korḥah; Ibn Ezra on Leviticus 19:27; *Zohar* 2:122b, 176b–177b (*SdTs*), 186b; 3:130b–134b, 139a–140b (last two *IR*), 289a–b, 295a–b (last two *IZ*). Cf. David Kimḥi on 2 Samuel 10:5.

Many of the explanations in rabbinic and halakhic literature deem shaving with a razor to be a practice of idolators. On shaving or trimming one's beard, see Leviticus 19:27 (and Ibn Ezra and Baḥya ben Asher, ad loc.). See *Sifra, Qedoshim* 6:4; BT *Makkot* 20a–21a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:16; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:1; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Avodat Kokhavim* 12:7; idem, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:37; *Kol Bo*, 97; Eleazar of Worms, *Sefer ha-Roqeaḥ, Hilkhot Teshuvah*; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Wistinetzki) #1664; *Zohar* 3:141a (*IR*); Caro, *Shulḥan Arukh, Yoreh De'ah* 182:10; Margaliot, *Ammudei Araẓim*, 64a–68a. See also BT *Horayot* 12a.

326. **tying together *peace* and *uprightness*...** See M *Avot* 1:12, in the name of Hillel: "Be among the disciples of Aaron—loving peace and pursuing peace, loving human beings and drawing them near Torah." The esoteric meaning of the rabbinic traditions that depict Aaron as a peacemaker and exemplar of gentle rebuke represent his success as the result of the sacrificial offerings—not his kindness or charisma. The sacrifices joined together *Yesod*

and *Shekhinah*, signified by *peace* and *uprightness.* *Shekhinah* was transformed and acquired the name *uprightness* as a result of Her connection to *Yesod*, called *peace*—all engineered by Aaron.

On Aaron as a peacemaker, see *Sifra, Millu'im* (*Shemini*) 1:37, 45d; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12; B, 24; BT *Yoma* 71b, *Sanhedrin* 6b; *Zohar* 3:60a, 88a. On Aaron leading sinners back to God (based on Malachi 2:6), see *Sifra, Aḥarei Mot* 8:10, 83c; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12.

The full verse in Malachi reads: *A Torah of truth was in his mouth, and nothing perverse was on his lips. In peace and uprightness he walked with me, and returned many from iniquity*.

327. **East shines upon south…** After describing the flow of emanation via the imagery of Moses anointing Aaron as High Priest, and then of Aaron's sacrificial offerings, the author explains the same dynamics using the imagery of the sun, wind, and ultimately moon. *Tif'eret*, symbolized by *sun* and "Moses," conveys divine emanation upon "south," representing *Ḥesed*, on Moses' right. This is the esoteric meaning of Aaron's return to Moses. The chiefs, led by Nahshon, follow, receiving their light on the left side.

Nahshon son of Amminadab, a chieftain from the tribe of Judah, is famous for his role at the Red Sea. According to rabbinic tradition, none of the Israelites fleeing Pharaoh's army wanted to be the first to enter and cross—until finally Nahshon jumped in. See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 5; BT *Sotah* 37a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:7. On Nahshon as symbolizing the divine left arm, see *Zohar* 3:156a, 181b.

The context of the verse from Ecclesiastes (1:5–6) reads: *The sun rises and the sun sets, and to its place it strives, where it rises. Moving toward the south, circling toward the north, round and round goes the wind, and on its rounds the wind returns*. The context in Exodus (34:30–31) reads: *Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, and, look,*

the skin of his face glowed, and they were afraid to come near him. Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the chiefs in the community came back to him, and Moses spoke to them. The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *My Lord, YHVH, You Yourself have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your mighty hand*.

328. **light of Compassion bounding it…** The sun, representing *Tif'eret*, extends divine overflow to *Ḥesed* on the right side, symbolized by Aaron and "south," and then to *Gevurah* on the left side, signified by Nahshon and "north." Compassion (or Mercy) is the primary attribute of *Tif'eret*, and it encompasses *Gevurah* to contain the harsh powers of Judgment. The author's interpretation explains why the verse differentiates between the sun's *moving toward the south*, but *circling toward the north*.

The simple meaning of the verses in Ecclesiastes emphasizes the daily, routine journeys of the sun and wind.

According to rabbinic tradition, God wanted to create the world with judgment, but He foresaw that such a world would not endure, so He created it with compassion (or mercy) instead. See Rashi on Genesis 1:1; cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:4; 12:15; 21:7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40, 166b–167a.

329. **whose *rounds*…** Around whom does *Tif'eret* manifest as wind? The answer is *Shekhinah*, who is called *place* and signified by the "west." He longs for Her; and He disseminates divine light upon the seven lower *sefirot*, themselves each comprised of ten *sefirot*—such that *Shekhinah* is enfolded in their midst. The divine overflow extends as well to lower worlds and to the seventy angels appointed over the other nations of the world.

Pants renders שואף (*sho'ef*); alternatively, *strives, glides*. Here the verb is construed as indicating *Tif'eret*'s erotic longing for His Lover (who is designated *place*). It is as inexorable as the sun's daily movement toward the west. On Ecclesiastes 1:5, see *Zohar* 1:136a, 146b–147a; 3:181b.

330. **Moses illuminates Aaron below…** The flow of divine emanation described above occurs on the human plane as well. Moses shines light upon Aaron, on the right side, and then upon the princes who are posted on the left. Moses apparently places these chiefs around the altar, signifying *Shekhinah*, and then surrounds them himself. The identity of the princes here is obscure since the use of the verse from Numbers identifies them with the seventy elders in the desert.

Here the elders are stationed around the altar, but cf. Numbers 11:24: [Moses] *gathered seventy men* [or: *representatives*] *of the elders of the people and stood them round about the Tent*, where *Tent* also symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

331. **seventy elders suckled from Moses…** This paragraph draws upon the theophany in Exodus 24 and Rashi's commentary there. The biblical story reads (24:9–11): *Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel ascended. They saw the God of Israel; and beneath His feet was like a fashioning of sapphire pavement and like the essence of heaven for purity. Yet against the nobles of the Children of Israel He did not send forth His hand—they beheld God, and they ate and drank*. Rashi comments (on Exodus 24:10), s.v. *va-yir'u et elohei Yisra'el*: "They looked, gazing, and were liable for death, but the blessed Holy One did not wish to disturb the joy caused by the Giving of the Torah, so he delayed with Nadab and Abihu until the dedication of the Dwelling, and with the elders until *The people were complaining bitterly… and the fire of YHVH blazed against them* (Numbers 11:1)—the nobles in the camp."

Cf. Numbers 11:25: *YHVH came down in the cloud and spoke to him and held back some of the spirit that was upon him and put it upon the seventy men* [or: *representatives*], *the elders; and as the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, but did it no more*. In this verse the elders gain רוח (*ruaḥ*), *spirit*, from Moses, whereas in the *Zohar*'s

interpretation of Ecclesiastes 1:6, it is the רוח (*ruaḥ*), *wind*, from Moses that surrounds them. The *wind* had to return to the elders after God ravaged the outskirts of the camp. See *Tanḥuma, Beha'alotekha* 16.

On the distinctive quality of Moses' prophecy, see BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through a speculum that does not shine [or: an opaque glass], whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a speculum that shines [or: a translucent glass]." See Vol. 11, p. 59, n. 88.

332. ***Breath of breaths…*** This esoteric statement can be understood only in terms of the ways in which the verse is interpreted elsewhere in the *Zohar*, and by continuing to rely on the just-stated associations of Moses with the sun and *Tif'eret*. The term הבל (*hevel*), *breath*, is the theme word in Ecclesiastes, which tradition ascribes to King Solomon. Its basic meaning is "breath, vapor," and thus related to "wind, spirit," whereas in the biblical book it connotes "futility, vanity, absurdity, ephemerality, that which is empty and fleeting." Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, the verse's sevenfold iteration of the term (counting each plural form as two) signifies that there are seven *breaths* altogether—corresponding to the seven lower *sefirot*. Thus, the deeper meaning of the term ironically reveals that the very opposite is true—that the world depends upon Divinity itself! These seven are then correlated with the *sun* (in Ecclesiastes 1:3, 5), signifying *Tif'eret* and the six *sefirot* surrounding Him; here it means that King Solomon recognized how everything is rooted in Moses.

"Prophecy" renders נביאה (*nevi'ah*), but the meaning (obscure because of evidently flawed spelling) might be to designate Solomon as a prophet. The translation follows T1 and V5; the printed text reads simply "When King Solomon saw this, he said…"

On *breaths* as a symbol for the *sefirot*, see *Zohar* 1:146b (*ST*); 2:10b, 38b–39a, 59a; 3:47b, 291b (*IZ*).

333. ***The sun shines…*** The light of *Tif'eret* blessed the people of Israel during the entire forty years of their desert sojourn, as a direct result of Moses' absorption of Torah during his forty days on Mount Sinai. The rabbinic principle that a fraction of a period is counted like that entire period is applied here to a year—his forty-day sojourn on the mountain during the first year in the desert counts for that year, and then apparently the forty days symbolize forty years. While the sun shone on account of Moses' revelation, it set when he died.

On a fraction of a year being considered as a whole year, see *Seder Olam Rabbah* 4; Rashi on Numbers 14:33, s.v. *arba'im shanah*.

334. **supernal place shining…** The two "places" here are interpreted as symbols for *Shekhinah* and *Binah*, respectively. While *YHVH*, represented by Moses, yearns for *Binah*, Her light shines down upon a lower place, designating *Shekhinah*.

335. **onto the moon…** This time the phrase in Ecclesiastes 1:5 is understood to refer to *YHVH*'s longing for *Shekhinah*—resulting in His shining upon the moon, which symbolizes Her. On the human plane this is replicated through Moses' imbuing Joshua with some of his own glory.

When Moses was about to die, God told him to take Joshua and instruct him as follows: *You shall set some of your splendor upon him, so that the whole Israelite community will heed* (Numbers 27:20). See BT *Bava Batra* 75a: "*You shall set some of your splendor upon him*—and not *all your splendor*. The elders of that generation said: 'The face of Moses was like that of the sun; the face of Joshua was like that of the moon.'"

336. **when he was in the world…** When Moses was alive, *Tif'eret* spread divine light upon all the lower seven *sefirot*. After Moses' death, however, that light is bestowed upon *Shekhinah* alone.

The remaining material on *parashat Terumah* is translated in Vol. 5, pp. 346–60.

337. **[46c]...** Not included in this translation is the preceding material on *parashat Ki Tissa*, in line with Scholem's assessment of its late composition. See Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 219.

The following passage is fragmentary. It is also apparently missing previous material. It is not found in extant manuscripts or in the first edition of *Zohar Ḥadash* (1597); its earliest witness is the Venice edition (1658). See Scholem, *ZḤ*. Cf. Recanati, *Commentary on the Torah* (58c–d).

Regarding the presumed context, a speculative reading of the immediately preceding passage on this *parashah* (which is not extant) would read: "On the side of holiness, on the right, is *Shekhinah*—who is called Holy Thought." See *Matoq mi-Devash*.

338. **on the left side...** One of the ways in which Kabbalah represents the demonic realm is through recourse to a parallel set of demonic *sefirot* that manifest evil in the world; the male and female on that side are Samael and Lilith, signified here by Wickedness and Wicked Thought, respectively. Lilith plays the harlot—arousing men's lusts, which are depicted here as forces that dwell within her domain. If a man succumbs, he becomes attached to that side.

On evil in Kabbalah, see Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Ma'amar al ha-Atsilut ha-Semalit*; *Zohar* 1:167a; 2:30b; 3:41b; Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 56–81; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:447–74.

339. **ascent offering...** Here, the ascent (or burnt) offering performs two functions: it facilitates the sinner to redirect his thoughts toward Holy Thought, signifying *Shekhinah*; and it provides nourishment to Lilith and her minions, as appeasement to distract them from the sins of Israel and the realm of the holy.

On the ascent offering, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:3, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "The ascent offering is due only על הרהור הלב (*al hirhur ha-lev*), for sinful imagining [literally: for imagining of the heart, or mind]." See above, note 304.

On the sacrifices as being offered to the demonic side, see *Sifra, Shemini, Millu'im* 1:3, 43c; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 158–59; *Zohar* 1:11a, 64a–65a, 89b (*ST*), 113b–114b, 138b, 145b, 174b, 190a, 210b, 247b; 2:33a, 111b, 130a, 141a, 152b, 154b, 157a–b, 169a, 181b, 184b–185a, 203b, 227a–b, 237b–239b, 242b, 266b, 269a (last two *Heikh*); 3:63a–b (*Piq*), 101b–102a, 202b–203a, 224a–b, 258b–259a; *ZḤ* 20c, 67b (*ShS*), 87b–c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 165–67; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 124–27; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:453–54; 3:890–95.

340. **ethereal plume…** The second column of smoke supports the holy angels, including those from the side of Judgment. They all rise together into the domain of *Shekhinah*, uniting and preparing for the union of *Shekhinah* with *Tif'eret*, as represented by the phrase "body interlaced with body."

341. **a man crowns his will…** Now that the transgressor's sacrifice has caused the coalescence of angels and *Shekhinah*, his own soul communes with *Shekhinah*, designated as "Pure Thought." In the *Zohar* the priests symbolize *Ḥesed* and the Levites symbolize *Gevurah*, the two arms of Divinity. The latter now receive *Shekhinah* within their loving embrace, which is described as pleasing—referring to the *pleasing fragrance to YHVH* (Leviticus 1:9).

342. **World that is Coming emits all its light…** Once there is unity among the lower realm of *sefirot, Binah*—represented by World that is Coming—suffuses them all with radiance, bringing joy and illumination. The transgressor completes his separation from the domain of

evil and becomes part of the ascending unity—all uniting within *Keter*, signified by Concealed Thought.

343. **no one may delight in it…** Because of the ascent offering's connection to perverse desires and Lilith, the entire carcass must be incinerated. No portion of the animal is eaten.

According to rabbinic law, sacrificial portions and fat that were not totally consumed by fire in the Temple during the day were to be burnt on the altar throughout the night. On the sacrificial portions and fat, see M *Berakhot* 1:1; BT *Berakhot* 26b; *Zohar* 2:130a, 141a, 162a.

344. **wardens of law appear…** These sections of the offering are burnt at night because that is when Lilith's legions rule, and this food distracts them from the realm of holiness. The remainder of the offerings is designated for these demonic forces, keeping them at bay, and far from the realm of holiness.

"Wardens of law" renders *gardinei nimmusin*. The first word is presumably based on the Castilian *guardián*, "guardian." See Scholem, "Carteset Scholem"; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 347; Corominas, *Diccionario*, 3:246–48. On the general theme of assuaging the Other Side, see above, note 5.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *Command Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the teaching of* העולה (*ha-olah*), *the ascent offering. It is that which ascends* [or: *It is the very ascent offering*] *upon its hearth on the altar all night till morning, and the fire of the altar shall keep burning on it.'*

345. **the *priest shall atone for him*…** The full verse in Leviticus reads: *All its fat he shall turn to smoke on the altar like the fat of the communion sacrifice, and the priest shall atone for him, for his transgression; and he shall be forgiven*.

346. **[48a]** Apparently based on stylistic criteria, Scholem suggests that the following section derives from the transitional layer of Zoharic composition—after the epic layer of the *Zohar*, but before *Tiqqunei Zohar*. See

Scholem, *ZḤ*. The printed editions label this section *Sitrei Torah*, but it does not bear the stylistic qualities of *Sitrei Torah*. See Vol. 11, pp. xiv, 623, n. 1. Moreover, the first printing of *Zohar Ḥadash* (Salonika, 1597) does not contain any material on *parashat Aḥarei Mot*, so it appears in print for the first time in the Venice edition in 1658. In the later printed editions, *Zohar Ḥadash* on *Aḥarei Mot* begins on 46d, but the material there (up to this point on 48a) is part of *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on Ruth, which is translated in Vol. 11, pp. 76–79, 279–97.

347. **Sabbath Meals...** The three Sabbath meals (on Friday night, Sabbath noon, and Sabbath afternoon) are associated with three divine configurations, spanning all of the *sefirot*: *Shekhinah* on Friday night; the Holy Ancient One (or *Keter*), at Sabbath noon; and *Ze'eir Anpin* (or the middle six *sefirot*) on Sabbath afternoon.

Rabbinic tradition derives the obligation to have three meals on the Sabbath from the threefold iteration of the word *today* in the biblical verse talking about consuming manna on the Sabbath. The rabbis presupposed a cultural norm of two daily meals—making the third meal a sign of the Sabbath's distinctiveness, providing special delight. "Delight" renders ענג (*oneg*), whose three letters also appear as the first letters of the words עדן נהר גן (*eden nahar gan*), *Eden, river, garden* from the verse in Genesis.

On the three Sabbath meals, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:25; BT *Shabbat* 117b–118b; *Zohar* 2:88a–b; 3:94b, 288b; *ZḤ* 48c. On various correspondences between the meals and the *sefirot*, see Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 16:25; idem, "Shulḥan shel Arba," 482; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1234–36; Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 53–55.

The context in Isaiah (58:13–14) reads: *If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, from engaging in your affairs on My holy day, and call the Sabbath 'delight,' the holy of YHVH 'honored'; if you honor it by not going your own ways,*

pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word, then you will delight in YHVH, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob—for the mouth of YHVH has spoken.

348. ***Ehyeh, Ehyeh, Ehyeh…*** When Moses asked God for His name, He replied obscurely, '*Ehyeh asher Ehyeh, I will be who I will be.' He said, 'Thus shall you say to the Children of Israel: "Ehyeh, I will be, has sent me to you."'* (Exodus 3:14). The three iterations of *Ehyeh* prompted the rabbis to offer three instances of divine accompaniment in exile—as detailed here. While the biblical text records God's statement of His name, the text here says—without explanation—that Moses uttered the name three times. Perhaps the intent is that while God provided the esoteric key to redemption, Moses uttered the name with the magical intention of inducing *Shekhinah* to be present with the Jewish people in their future exiles.

See BT *Megillah* 29a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them. When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them. And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them." See above, p. 445, n. 5; p. 451, n. 17.

Though not technically an exile—since the people remained in their land—the harsh decrees promulgated by the Seleucids in the second century B.C.E. (who, as successors to Alexander the Great's conquest and rule, are associated with Greece) are reckoned by the *Zohar* as another exile. The rulers alienated the people from proper worship at their Temple in Jerusalem. This "exile" came to an end with the Maccabean victory and rededication of the Temple. See BT *Berakhot* 9b.

On the timing of Israel's redemption, see BT *Sanhedrin* 98a, where Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi discusses Isaiah

60:22 as describing that redemption (*I, YHVH, will hasten it in its time*): "It is written *in its time*; yet it is written *I will hasten it*. If they prove worthy, *I will hasten it*; if not, *in its time*." See Rashi and Radak on Isaiah 60:22; *Zohar* 1:117b; 3:66b; *ZḤ* 88b (*MhN, Rut*). On the verse from Exodus, see *Zohar* 1:15a–b, 251b (*Mat, Hash*); 2:49b; 3:11a, 65a–b.

349. **Rabbi Pinḥas said…** This fragment is part of a fully developed homily that begins at *ZḤ* 23c (*MhN*). The printed text here at 48a–b draws upon that teaching at 23c, in which the dove's return to Noah is expounded as a model of the Jewish people's repentant return to God during the Babylonian exile. The formulation there, also with Rabbi Pinḥas speaking, leads to the question-and-answer format that appears in the next paragraph. No extant manuscripts correspond to this printed text.

350. **one full day…** If the Jewish people had returned in *teshuvah*, the blessed Holy One would not have tarried in redeeming them.

See *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:40: "*When YHVH afflicted me on the day of His fierce anger* (Lamentations 1:12). Rabbi Aḥa said, 'One day did the anger of the blessed Holy One burn fiercely; and had Israel performed *teshuvah*, they would have cooled it.'"

An alternative translation yields "If they had repented, they would not have remained in exile for a full day," alluding to the rabbinic assessment of a divine "day" as lasting a thousand years. From the perspective of the medieval Spanish kabbalists—for whom the present exile had already lasted more than twelve hundred years—it could have ended after less than a thousand years, had the people repented.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:2: "A day of the blessed Holy One is a thousand years, as is said: *For a thousand years in Your eyes are like a day—yesterday that has passed* (Psalms 90:4)."

On *teshuvah*, returning to God, as a prerequisite for redemption, see JT *Ta'anit* 1:1, 63d; BT *Sanhedrin* 97b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 43; *Tanḥuma, Beḥuqqotai* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beḥuqqotai* 5; *Zohar* 1:117b; 2:188b–189a; *ZḤ* 8a, 23c (both *MhN*). On redemption in "one day," see *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 4; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* (Luria) 28, (Higger) 27; *Zohar* 1:116b–117a; 2:17a (*MhN*), 227b; 3:270a; *ZḤ* 28c (*MhN*); above, note 196.

351. **He asked him…** Rabbi Pinḥas' interlocutor is not identified here nor in the parallel passage at 23c.

352. ***the day is still long…*** In the narrative in Genesis, Jacob wonders why the shepherds are waiting to water the sheep, rather than grazing them. The context (29:7–8) reads: *He said, 'Look, the day is still long; it is not time to gather in the herd. Water the sheep and go and let them graze.' They said, 'We cannot until all the flocks are gathered, and they roll the stone off the mouth of the well and we water the sheep.'* Here, *the day* represents one divine day, equaling a thousand years. If the people performed *teshuvah*, redemption would follow immediately. If they did not, *the day is still long*, and they would not be redeemed without continued watering and feeding the flocks—apparently alluding to the people's ongoing Torah study and pious behavior.

See also Psalms 95:7: *For He is our God and we are the people He tends and the flock of His hand, today—if you would heed His voice*. On the length of the divine day, see above, note 350.

353. **the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava…** Rav Hamnuna Sava offers an alternative criterion for attaining redemption—namely through the consummation of the divine name. The previous explanation largely follows the traditional rabbinic emphasis on the performance of *teshuvah*, whereas Rav Hamnuna stresses instead the kabbalistic aim of perfecting the tetragrammaton, *YHVH*.

Historically, Rav Hamnuna Sava (the Elder) was a Babylonian teacher who lived in the mid-third century. Generally in the *Zohar*, Rav Hamnuna Sava appears as a contemporary of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai (who lived in the second century). In the Talmud, Rav Hamnuna occasionally transmits teachings of Rabbi Shim'on (e.g., BT *Ḥullin* 21a, *Temurah* 15a), and several prayers are attributed to him (BT *Berakhot* 11b, 17a, 58a). In the *Zohar* roles are reversed and Rabbi Shim'on cites Rav Hamnuna. Throughout the *Zohar*, Hamnuna is greatly revered, and several original ritual acts are attributed to him; the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava is cited frequently as well. His "book" is part of the *Zohar*'s fictional library. See above, note 296.

354. **Israel is compared to a dove…** See BT *Berakhot* 53b: "The Assembly of Israel is compared to a dove, as is written: *The wings of the dove are inlaid with silver, and her pinions with precious gold* (Psalms 68:14). Just as the dove is saved only by her wings, so Israel is saved only by the commandments."

The Gentile prophet Balaam recognized that his sorcery was no match for God's protection of Israel, but once the people of Israel deviated from the upright path, divine protection was removed.

The paragraph opens with "Alternatively," apparently as a continuation of the truncated exposition above by Rabbi Pinḥas regarding the dove. The citation of verses at the end combines elements from the two alternate paths.

On Israel being compared to a dove, see BT *Shabbat* 49a, 130a, *Gittin* 45a, *Sanhedrin* 95a; *ZḤ* 22d, 23c (both *MhN*).

355. ***Do not stray…*** In the episode with Balaam and its aftermath, the Israelites were seduced by Midianite women who then led them to idolatry. The verse from Numbers regarding the ritual tassels is interpreted by the rabbis as a warning against these distractions. See BT *Berakhot* 12b: "It was taught in a *baraita*: *After your hearts*—this refers to

heresy.... *After your eyes*—this refers to thoughts of transgressions of licentiousness.... *You go whoring*—this refers to idol worship....” Here, the two distractions are interpreted as references to the wicked influences of Esau and Ishmael, an allusion that was excised in the Venice printing (1658), out of fear of the censor. The Venice text reads: “*Nothing but evil all the time*—and one with understanding [will understand].”

The doubled רע רע (*ra ra*), *Wicked, wicked*, in the verse from Proverbs echoes the רק רע (*raq ra*), *Nothing but evil*, in the verse from Genesis. Further, the doubling may allude to the doubled prohibition of following after one’s heart and eyes, in the verse from Numbers.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: “*Wicked, wicked* [or: *bad, bad*],” *says the buyer, and he goes away and then preens himself*.

356. ***you will see My back...*** If one follows after one’s eyes—namely straying after idolatry—God shows only His back; and His wrath is experienced as divine absence.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *I will take away My palm and you will see My back, but My face will not be seen*. The verse in Deuteronomy concludes: *For a wayward brood are they, children with no trust in them*.

357. **when Israel was whole-hearted...** When faithful, the people of Israel experience God’s beneficence, which is represented as seeing the blessed Holy One face-to-face. Faithlessness is symbolized by illicit sexual relations, which is applied here to disrupting the union of the divine couple —*Ḥokhmah* (the Father) and *Binah* (the Mother)—thereby not only exposing their nakedness (or genitals) but also “stripping” or depriving them of one another and of the flow from above. This is the profound effect that human sin has upon the cosmic parents.

See *Zohar* 1:219a (Vol. 3, p. 323, n. 121); 2:60b, 84a (Vol. 4, p. 468, n. 364), 126b, 176a, 176b, 177b (last two

SdTs); 3:15b, 74a–79b; *ZḤ* 58d; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 348–49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1367–72.

The full verse in Leviticus reads literally: *Your father's nakedness and your mother's nakedness you shall not expose. She is your mother; you shall not expose her nakedness*. In its simple sense, the first half of the verse means *The nakedness reserved for your father—that is, your mother's nakedness—you shall not expose*. See Levine, *Leviticus*, ad loc.; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, ad loc.

358. **a back side to holiness…** The "back" does not always refer to the *Sitra Aḥra* and the side of Judgment. Here, the terms "front" (or "face"), "back" (or "rear"), "above," and "below" all express inter-sefirotic relationships, rather than an absolute nature that inheres innately within them.

359. **what Moses sought…** When Moses asked God, *Oh, show me Your glory* (Exodus 33:18), he was requesting a vision of *Tif'eret*, who stands in the position of "face" or "front" in relation to *Shekhinah* below. Afterward, he asked that the blessed Holy One bestow Israel with *neshamah*, meaning a vision of *Shekhinah*—who is the "face" to the world below, yet who is also the "back" to *Tif'eret*, above. God responded, saying, "*you will see My back,*" intentionally excluding the people of Israel. Thus, since Moses was aligned with *Tif'eret*, when he saw *Shekhinah* She stood in relation to him as the "back," while to Israel, She was positioned as the "face."

The *Zohar* plays on the different conjugations in the verse from Exodus, noting first that the active form in the clause *you will see My back* refers to Moses. In the next clause, according to the verse's simple meaning, the passive verb form יראו (*yera'u*) yields *but My face will not be seen*. Here, the author revocalizes the latter verb as the plural active form *yire'u*, yielding *they will not see*, in order to contrast the respective experiences of Moses and the Israelites.

360. **they lost the supernal face…** “Face”—whether upper or lower—signifies the overflow of divine light; with each catastrophe the people lost further increments of that emanation. The sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden triggered the loss of overflow from *Tif’eret*. The Israelites’ sin with the golden calf in the desert precipitated the cessation of emanation from *Shekhinah*. Each exile forfeited the overflow from the union of *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*. The “great mystery” of continued degradation apparently refers to the fallen spiritual state of the Jews in the time of the *Zohar*’s composition.

361. **’ (*yod*)—upper face…** After explaining the performative nature of rank among terms such as “face” and “back,” the *Zohar* shows how the same relations obtain among the four letters of the tetragrammaton and their sefirotic correlates, as well. In the kabbalistic scheme, *yod* represents *Ḥokhmah*; *he* represents *Binah*; *vav* signifies *Tif’eret* (the middle six *sefirot*); and the final *he* symbolizes *Shekhinah*. Each of them can serve as face or back in relation to another *sefirah*, depending upon which one is above the other.

362. ***YHVH*—who is called “back”…** The *Zohar* posits three rungs of the name *YHVH*, corresponding to the three iterations of the name *Ehyeh* (see above, note 348). Then it associates these rungs with three different areas of the Temple and three different Adam-figures.

Within the Temple precincts lie three distinct areas: the Holy of Holies, the Holy, and the Courtyard. The Holy of Holies is the innermost sanctum and contains the ark. Only the High Priest may enter this space, and only on Yom Kippur. “The Holy” (or “the Holy Place”) is the location of the table, the candelabrum, and the altar of incense. The Courtyard holds the altar where all the animal sacrifices are offered. This paragraph is obscure, but these three spaces may be designating *Binah*, *Tif’eret*, and *Shekhinah*, respectively. *Shekhinah* is the lowest rung of the divine realm

—and thus demarcates the boundary between the holy and the profane. Alternatively, "Holy [of]" signifies *Ḥokhmah*; "Holies" represents *Binah*; and "the Holy" symbolizes *Tif'eret*.

On the different precincts of the Temple, see Exodus 25–31; Sarna, *Exodus*, 155–56. On the Holy and the Holy of Holies, see Exodus 26:33: *You shall set the curtain under the clasps and you shall bring there, within the curtain, the ark of the covenant; and the curtain shall divide for you between the Holy and the Holy of Holies*.

363. ***today… today… today…*** This verse is the rabbinic source of the obligation to eat three meals on the Sabbath (see above, note 347). Here, the three iterations of the word *today* are interpreted in light of the three corresponding iterations of the word *calyx* (from the biblical description of the lampstand in the Tabernacle) in Exodus 25:35: *A calyx as part of it under every two shafts, a calyx as part of it under every two shafts, and a calyx as part of it under every two shafts*.

This esoteric passage does not fully explicate its images. The heavenly calyx apparently signifies *Binah*, who contains the twenty-two letters of the alphabet. The signet ring symbolizes the realm below *Binah*—where there are the two sides called *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, as well as the quartet of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah*.

An alternative translation reads: "Beneath the upper calyx is a calyx appointed over the twenty-two letters. In the upper signet ring…" This may be interpreted to mean that the upper calyx designates *Tif'eret*, while the lower calyx, overseeing the twenty-two letters of the alphabet, symbolizes *Shekhinah*. The upper signet ring would signify *Binah*, under whom are *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. *Binah* is often characterized as ם (final *mem*), whose square shape represents the "four sides of the world"—which designate the four *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah*.

By invoking a signet ring, which has no intrinsic biblical connection to the calyx on the menorah in the Temple, the

author has imaginatively refashioned the candelabrum.

"Calyx" renders כפתור (*kaftor*); alternatively, "knob." See Exodus 25:31–36; *Zohar* 3:131a (*IR*), 154a, 165a, 170b, 172b, 209a. On the different interpretations of this paragraph, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

364. **They grasp this ring…** Emanative energies on the right side rise up and secure the place of *Ḥesed* within the broader structure of the middle six *sefirot*, which are signified by *Tif'eret*. This establishes a link between the sefirotic right side and six hundred thousand angels below. The same action is then mirrored on the left; and ultimately they all intertwine.

In the *Zohar*, sword-bearing angels on the right and compassionate angels on the left is a counter-intuitive image. (Usually the right exhibits compassion while the left expresses judgment.)

On the figure six hundred thousand, see Exodus 12:37; Numbers 11:21. On the image of the sword on the thigh, see Song of Songs 3:7–8: *Behold, the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding it, of the warriors of Israel—all of them skilled with a sword, expert in war, each with his sword on his thigh because of terror in the night*. See also Exodus 32:27; Psalms 45:4.

365. **They surge upward…** All the forces on the right side billow upward toward *Ḥesed*, which is represented as "the priest." This elicits a downward flow of emanation onto *Tif'eret*, the upper calyx, from a hidden aspect of *Ḥesed*, symbolized by "High Priest." This overflow stimulates yet another emanation, called "dew of bdellium," from a higher source—*Keter*, also called "Ancient One"—onto the "priest." The "priest" conveys this flow onto the six *sefirot* that are encompassed within *Tif'eret*, namely *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, also called the "six days."

The *Zohar* treats *Ḥesed* as the first day of creation, based on an interpretation of Psalms 89:3, which reads: חסד יבנה עולם (*olam ḥesed yibbaneh*). The verse is normally understood to

mean *Forever will love be established*, but it is construed midrashically as *The world is built by love*. See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 9; *Sifra, Qedoshim* 10:11, 92d; JT *Yevamot* 11:1, 11d; *Sanhedrin* 5:1, 22c; 9:1, 26d; BT *Sanhedrin* 58b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 4; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 21; *Midrash Tehillim* 89:2; *Zohar* 2:79a, 166b; 3:77a, 145b, 259b; *ZḤ* 122a (*Mat*). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:4; *Zohar* 1:230b.

סבא דסבין (*Sabba de-Sabbin*), "Eldest of Elders," is a playful way of rendering the Hebrew philosophical formula הסבות סבת (*sibbat ha-sibbot*), which is based on Latin *causa causarum*, "cause of causes"—referring to the ultimate ground of being; here, the philosophical concept is rendered as "Origin of All Origins." The Ancient One is the source of all the lower nine *sefirot*.

"Bdellium" renders the rabbinic Aramaic בדולחא (*bedulḥa*), which derives from Hebrew בדולח (*bedolaḥ*). The Hebrew word appears only twice in the Bible: once in the context of the geographical setting of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:12), and once describing the color of the manna (Numbers 11:7)—which is also linked with dew (ibid., 9; Exodus 16:14). *Bedolaḥ* is apparently an aromatic yellowish transparent resin of trees, though a number of ancient and medieval sources identify it as a precious stone. Rashi on Numbers 11:7 describes it as "crystal," and in medieval Hebrew *bedolaḥ* means "pearl" and "crystal."

On the priest as symbolizing *Ḥesed*, see *Zohar* 1:244a; 2:143b; 3:32a–b, 90b, 145b–146b, 151b, 176a–b, 241b; *ZḤ* 46c, 87a (*MhN, Rut*). On bdellium, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:2; *Zohar* 1:232a (*Tos*); 2:136b, 176b (*SdTs*); 3:49a, 128b (*IR*), 155b; *ZḤ* 38d. On the "Eldest of Elders" and "Origin of Origins," see *Zohar* 1:22a (*TZ*), 72b; 2:205a; 3:128b (*IR*), 288b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 4 (6–7).

366. **bdellium congeals...** The divine emanation from the side of *Gevurah* materializes as it descends from the divine realm into the angelic realm, taking on the appearance of the precious stone bdellium and becoming

heavenly food—*bread of the angels* (Psalms 78:25). Two different classes of angels—aligned with *Ḥesed* on the right and with *Gevurah* on the left—are nourished by this crystalized overflow, each group at its apportioned time. The main mission of mighty angels on the left is to eradicate harmful forces, represented here as "Mountains and Boulders."

The transition from heavenly realms to the mundane necessitates a translation from the spiritual to the material. In order for manna (or other ethereal entities, such as angels) to descend into this world, they must take on aspects of the material world as garments.

On the hue of manna, which is gathered each morning, see Numbers 11:7: *Its color was like the color of* הבדולח (*ha-bedolaḥ*), *bdellium*. On the materialization of spiritual entities, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 18:1; *Zohar* 1:34a–b, 58a, 81a, 98b (last two *ST*), 101a, 144a; 2:197a, 229b, 231a; 3:126b, 152a, 155b, 208a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 316–17. Cf. *Zohar* 2:61b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 395.

367. **This manna had no color…** The nighttime angels conveyed their heavenly sustenance down to our world in the material form of *a layer of dew*. The manna conferred by the daytime angels—in contrast to that from the night—bore color and taste, as indicated by Exodus 16:31: *The house of Israel called its name manna, and it was like coriander seed, white, and its taste was like a wafer in honey*.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *The manna was like coriander seed and its color like the color of bdellium*. On the association of manna with dew, see Exodus 16:13–14; Numbers 11:9.

On the manna and heavenly food, see Septuagint on Psalms 78:25; *Wisdom of Solomon* 16:20; BT *Yoma* 75b, *Ḥagigah* 12b; Naḥmanides on Exodus 16:4, 6; *Zohar* 1:157a–b, 226b, 246a; 2:40a, 61b–63a, 88a–89a, 101b, 153a, 156b–157b, 183a–b, 213b; 3:95b–96a, 97b, 128b

(*IR*), 155b, 156a, 196a, 208a, 272a, 292b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 86c, 90d (last two *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 63; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 132–33, 135; idem, *Sefer Mishkan ha-Edut*, 135; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Tashaq*, 308–9; idem, *Sefer Toledot ha-Adam*, 57b, 62b; idem, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 221–23; Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 616–17; Hecker, *Mystical Bodies*, 82–115.

368. ***it bred worms…*** The nighttime angels are aligned with Judgment on the left side, along with attendant demonic forces; that denigrated status implies that their manna is also inferior.

369. **Three sides are engraved…** These are three dimensions of the divine realm through which divine emanation flows, and they are symbolized by the three iterations of היום (*ha-yom*), *today*. The *Zohar* explains that the definite article ה (*he*) itself signifies each of these lines of influence, and that each of them bears the other three letters of the word—יום (*yom*), *day*. Thus there are three dimensions, each bearing three dimensions. Further, each iteration of the word contains four letters, yielding a total of twelve, which correspond to the twelve hours of daytime. The potency of the Sabbath is also expressed threefold—three aspects of the Sabbath, each one with a corresponding meal.

According to rabbinic convention, the period of daylight is always divided into twelve hours; each hour's length is flexible and varies according to the progression of seasons. On the derivation of the practice of three Sabbath meals from the verse in Exodus, see above, note 347.

370. **before sanctification of the day…** Before the onset of the Sabbath, angelic legions assemble, with three leaders—corresponding to the three dimensions of Sabbath. Like the bathing prescribed on the eve of the Sabbath for Jews below, these angelic princes bathe first in balsam, and then in the River of Fire (or the Dinur River). Even the roses that mark the bathing pools are cleansed

before the Sabbath—perhaps to rinse out their red coloration, symbolizing judgment, in exchange for white, the color of compassion. When they emerge, they attest to the onset of the Sabbath by reciting Genesis 2:1–3. This resembles the traditional liturgy, in which that passage is recited immediately following the evening prayer, to give testimony to God's resting on the Sabbath. Initially these nighttime angels are stationed on the left side of *Shekhinah*, but they spread out to distribute celestial blessing in all directions.

"Suzerains" is a conjectured rendering of קסירין (*qesirin*), a Zoharic neologism whose meaning is uncertain. The word may derive from the Latin *caesar*. Alternatively, it may derive from the Latin *castrum* (pl. *castra*), "fortress, military camp," and here it could refer to camps of angels. In the *Zohar*, "rivers of balsam" often represent the fragrant flow of emanation from *Binah* to *Shekhinah*, though here they apparently continue down into the angelic realm. "Channel" (or "pattern, template") renders טסירו (*tesiru*; and variants), a Zoharic neologism that occurs more frequently in the form טפסירא (*tafsira*). The version in *Sullam* reads תסירו (*tesiru*), which is possibly derived from the Greek *tesoros*, "treasury," and related to the word תיסוורא (*tisvvara*), "storehouse." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 67:6; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

"Rinsed" renders אתסחיין (*itsaḥyyan*), but a textual variant reads אתחסיין (*itḥasyyan*), indicating that the roses now show mercy.

On *qesirin* as "suzerains," see *Zohar* 1:195b, 199a. On *qesirin* as deriving from *castrum*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:11; *Zohar* 1:29a, 30b. On the rivers of balsam, see Vol. 11, p. 651, n. 65. On *tesiru* and variant forms, see *Zohar* 1:17b, 20b, 178a; 2:29a, 76a, 240a; 3:126a; *ZḤ* 63c; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *tesirin*; "Carteset Scholem," s.v. *tesira*; Vol. 1, p. 132, n. 189; Vol. 8, p. 303, n. 46. On *tafsira*, see *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 178 and n. 59; Scholem, *Zohar*, 1:129.

“Noble” is a speculative rendering of קריטין (*qeritin*); or perhaps “eminent, enlightened.” The term may be derived from the Persian *kardan*, “learned, skillful, intelligent, sagacious.” Alternatively, the supposed Persian derivation may disguise a different foreign source: the Greek word *kouratoreia*, “treasury,” or its Aramaic equivalent, קורטור (*qurtor*), “treasury, storehouse.” In place of the obscure *qeritin*, the printed versions offer the variant קדישין (*qadishin*), “holy ones.”

See *Zohar* 3:299a, 305b (*Tosafot*); *ZḤ* 55a; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 189; Vol. 9, pp. 357–58, n. 206. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 32b.

371. **sound of the shofar…** See BT *Shabbat* 35b: “The Sages taught: They sound six blasts on Shabbat eve. First blast—to stop the people from work in the fields. The second—to stop work in the city, and to close the stores. The third—to light the Sabbath lamp. These are the words of Rabbi Natan. Rabbi Yehudah the Prince says: The third—to remove phylacteries.” Here, the “shofar” refers to the supernal shofar—symbolizing *Binah*, whose blessing reaches from the uppermost regions of Divinity, down into the angelic and human realms.

On the practice of sounding the shofar every Friday, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shabbat* 5:18–20; *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 256:1.

372. **Sandalfon…** The name Sandalfon is similar to the Greek *sunadelphas*, meaning one who has siblings or is part of a group. Rabbinic tradition (BT *Ḥagigah* 13b) teaches that Sandalfon is “higher than his fellows by a [distance of] five hundred years’ journey; and he stands behind the chariot tying crowns for his Maker.” Here, the angel himself wears crowns engraved with magical letter permutations. The particular technique alluded to here, called *temurah*, involves exchanging letters whose numerical value has identical integers but different decimal values. Thus the letters א י ק (*alef yod qof*) represent the numbers 1, 10, and 100; as such, they can be switched with one another in order to educe esoteric meanings in the biblical text. The next numbers are 2, 20, 200, and the sequence proceeds accordingly.

On Sandalfon, see *Shemot Rabbah* 21:4; *Ma’yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:59); *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 97a; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§582, 597, 655–56, 821–22; *Tosafot, Ḥagigah* 13b, s.v. *ve-qosher*; Eleazar of Worms, *Sodei Razaya*, 74, 76–77, 112, 114; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 495; *Zohar* 1:167b; 2:58a, 146b, 202b, 209a, 245b–246a, 260a (last two *Heikh*); *ZḤ* 36b (*RR*), 38d, 80b (*MhN, Rut*);

Recanati on Genesis 19:27, 26a; *Sefer Razi'el ha-Mal'akh*, 24a; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 148–54; Green, *Keter*, 20–41. Cf. *Zohar* 1:37b, 132a, 168b–169a.

On the technique of *temurah*, see Naḥmanides, "Derashah le-Ḥatunnah" (in *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:138); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 68b; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 293. Cf. Vol. 11, p. 375, n. 65.

373. **Bo'el, Master of Elixirs...** The name בואל (*bo'el*), "Bo'el," means "God is in him." The name Raphael, which means "God heals," is found fragmentarily in Moses' brief prayer: אל נא רפא נא לה (*El na refa na lah*), *God, please, heal her, please*. Moses uttered his prayer as a plea for God to heal his sister, Miriam, who had been stricken with a skin disease for speaking out against Moses along with Aaron. This brief prayer consists of merely eleven Hebrew letters, which are considered here as a Divine Name—the "place" that cured Miriam. Bo'el's association with the blessed Holy One is evident in that the numerical value of his name (39) plus that of the divine name *Adonai* (65) equals the value of letters of the twice-uttered *na* (102), along with those two words themselves. Normally, in the evening the angels arrive with a nocturnal glow, but Bo'el removes this hostile covering on Sabbath eve.

In Numbers 12:7, God says of Moses: *In all my house he is trusted*. On Bo'el, see *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:27); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 67; *Zohar* 2:133b, 147a, 209b–210a; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 18.

374. **At that moment...** When the Sabbath is sanctified, the two archangels Michael and Gabriel are engraved on the sides of loving-kindness and judgment, and their light is dispersed to six hundred thousand angels below. Heavenly tables are prepared for each of these angels after they have inspected the dinner tables of the Jewish people below. The "known palace" appears to signify a mystical looking-glass that enables the angels to peer from their realm into the human realm.

On the angels viewing people's tables, see BT *Shabbat* 119b, in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Yehudah: "Two ministering angels accompany a person on Sabbath eve from the synagogue to his home, one a good [angel] and one an evil [one]. And when he arrives home and finds the lamp burning, the table laid, and the bed covered with a spread, the good angel exclaims, 'May it be like this on another Sabbath, too,' and the evil angel responds unwillingly, 'Amen.'" See BT *Ta'anit* 11a; *Zohar* 1:12b, 165b; 2:106b; *ZḤ* 47a (*MhN, Rut*), 48d, 85a (*MhN, Rut*).

On the significance of the table, see *ZḤ* 3a (*Mat*), 86d (*MhN, Rut*); Hecker, *Mystical Bodies*, 117–19.

375. **a Sabbath table…** Each home's prepared table ascends in front of two supreme angels—presumably Michael and Gabriel—who determine its fitness for the occasion.

On the symbolism of holy and demonic tables, see M *Avot* 3:3; *Zohar* 2:153b–154a; *ZḤ* 3a (*Mat*); previous note.

376. **When a women and her husband rejoice…** The context of an ideal table stresses the structural divisions of angels on the right and left, and loaves on the right and left. Here, the distinctive feature that makes the table paradigmatic is the harmony between the couple. Their joy elicits the crowning, which itself symbolizes the attainment of elevation and permanence.

The boundary between loaves of love and loaves of judgment is held firm, but one of each is taken by the supreme angel who oversees people's Sabbath tables for the blessing of *ha-motsi*—"who brings forth [bread from the earth]." Proof of the requirement for twelve loaves at the Sabbath table is derived from the biblical juxtaposition of the word *zeh, This*—whose numerical value is twelve—with the word rendered as *table*, creating an equation of *table* and twelve.

The arrangement of twelve loaves of bread evokes the showbread in the Tabernacle and Temple (Leviticus 24:5–9;

1 Kings 7:48; Nehemiah 10:32–33), while its characterization as manna further idealizes the Sabbath experience. Some kabbalists adopted a practice of having twelve loaves at each Sabbath meal, or alternatively four at each meal, for a total of twelve. See *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 5; *Zohar* 3:245a (and *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 7); Vital, *Kol Kitvei ha-Arizal, Sha'ar ha-Kavvanot*, 2:84c–85b; Poppers, *Sefer Peri Ets Ḥayyim, Sha'ar ha-Shabbat* 16–17.

On the requirement to rejoice at the Sabbath table, see *Zohar* 2:88a–b, 204a, 252b (*Heikh*); 3:94b; *TZ* 24, 69b.

377. **supernal spirit above them…** This phrase apparently alludes to *Shekhinah*. In addition to the householder reciting a blessing over bread at his table, angels too recite blessings over the spiritual essence of the tables that they visit at the beginning and conclusion of the meals.

Some of the later printed editions identify the supernal spirit with Uriel. See Munkacz; *Sullam*; Margaliot. Cf. *Zohar* 3:32b; *ZḤ* 13b (*MhN*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 8, n. 21.

378. **If one partakes with gusto…** One who eats the Sabbath meal with appetite bolsters *Shekhinah*, above. She is represented by "supernal gusto," which is the linear extension of appetite from the lower world to the upper.

This mirroring activity (or theurgy; sympathetic magic) is a common feature in Kabbalah.

379. **angels… eat as humans do…** Two classes of angels are represented here, distinguished by the mode in which they eat. A lower caste, called "Jewish demons," eat as humans do, whereas a higher caste eat spiritually. This ethereal consumption is akin to the representation of the righteous in the world that is coming, whose crowns signify their benefitting from the glow of *Shekhinah*.

In rabbinic and kabbalistic demonology, some demons are subject to—and descended from—Samael, Lilith, and Na'amah; meanwhile, Jewish demons are descended from and ruled by Ashmedai, king of demons. These latter

demons are constrained by the Torah. Sometimes they even appear as great sages, distinguished by special knowledge of philosophy and astrology. Indeed, Isaac ben Moses of Vienna (*Sefer Or Zaru'a, Hilkhot Eruvin*, 147) writes: "My teacher, Rabbi Judah the Pious, may his memory be a blessing, used to say that demons believe in the Torah and perform everything decreed by the sages." See Vol. 11, p. 99, n. 204.

On benefiting from *Shekhinah*, see BT *Berakhot* 17a, in the name of Rav: "In the world that is coming, there is no eating or drinking or procreation or business or jealousy or hatred or competition; rather, the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads, basking in the radiance of *Shekhinah*." Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 8:2, 4: "The phrase 'their crowns on their heads' [is a metaphor, implying] that they will possess the knowledge that they grasped, that allowed them to merit the life of the world to come, remains with them.... The sages referred metaphorically to this good, which is prepared for the righteous, as a banquet."

On angels' eating, see *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 12, in the name of Rabbi Yitsḥak: angels "are nourished from the splendor of *Shekhinah*." See *Wisdom of Solomon* 16:20; *Life of Adam and Eve* [*Apocalypse*], 4:1–2; *Bereshit Rabbah* 2:2; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:10; BT *Yoma* 21b, 75b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*, 6:1; 26:9; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 16:2, 80a; 48:3, 194a; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Aḥarei Mot* 7; *Shemot Rabbah* 47:5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:25; 21:16; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan*, ver. A, 1; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot Literatur* § 160; Vermes, "He is the Bread"; Chernus, *Mysticism in Rabbinic Judaism*, 74–87; Goodman, "Do Angels Eat?"; Hecker, *Mystical Bodies*, 42–46. Cf. John 6:47–51.

380. **One letter shines...** The first letter of the tetragrammaton—*yod*—shines over all. Beneath it stand the five letters of the divine name אלהים (*Elohim*). The first letter

of this name—*alef*—rotates, exuding divine overflow onto the angelic hosts.

Later printed editions conclude with the variant "and similarly for them all," indicating that each of the letters of the name *Elohim* undergoes the same process.

This paragraph's brief treatment of letters of the divine names is apparently unrelated to the previous or following material.

381. **one is required to rejoice…** One is obliged to delight in the Sabbath, which is expressed by resting and by feasting with various delicacies upon the Sabbath table. This provides delight in turn for heavenly and earthly creatures.

On the biblical association of Sabbath and delight, see Isaiah 58:13–14, quoted above, note 347. Cf. *Zohar* 1:5b; 2:47a; *ZḤ* 17a (*MhN*).

On the commandment of Sabbath delight, see BT *Shabbat* 118b: "How does one delight [in the Sabbath]? Rav Yehudah son of Rav Shemu'el son of Sheilat said in the name of Rav, 'With a dish of beets, large fish, and heads of garlic.'" See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shabbat* 30:7–10, 14; *Zohar* 2:88a, 204b, 252b (*Heikh*), 265b; 3:94b, 105a.

382. **When one comes home…** After the Friday evening prayers, one is surrounded by the protection of angels and *Shekhinah*.

On angelic accompaniment on Sabbath night, see above, note 374. The context in Psalms (91:7–10) reads: *A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right, but it will not come near you. You but look with your eyes, and the wicked's requital you see. For you—YHVH is your refuge, the Most High you have made your abode. No evil will befall you, nor affliction draw near your tent.*

383. **enters his home with happiness…** If one's home is properly arrayed on the Sabbath eve, and love prevails between husband and wife, *Shekhinah* delights in

them and their table. “Visitors” refers to *Shekhinah* and the angels or, alternatively, to the extra soul that each Jew receives on the Sabbath.

The image of an additional soul derives from BT *Beitsah* 16a, in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish: “On Sabbath eve, the blessed Holy One imparts an additional נשמה (*neshamah*), soul, to a human being. When Sabbath departs, it is taken from him.”

See *Zohar* 1:48a; 2:88b, 98a, 135b–136b, 204a–b; 3:173a, 288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 17a (*MhN*), 83a (*MhN, Rut*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1230–33; Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, 121–36.

384. **Evil impulse arrives…** If one fails to greet the Sabbath appropriately, holy beings abandon the people in the home; and they are seized by the forces of wickedness and impurity. Licentiousness sets in between man and wife, and harmony disappears.

See BT *Sotah* 17a, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: “איש ואשה (*Ish ve-ishah*), Husband and wife: if they are worthy, *Shekhinah* abides between them; if not, אש (*esh*), fire, consumes them.” This is wordplay based on spelling: together, *yod* and *he* comprise the divine name יה (*Yah*), an abbreviated form of the tetragrammaton. When the couple are seized by lust or discord, the *yod* disappears from the word *ish* (“husband”), and the *he* from the word *ishah* (“wife”), leaving each as *esh* (“fire”).

On the link between the evil impulse and the side of impurity, see BT *Bava Batra* 16a, in the name of Resh Lakish: “Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same.”

385. **His food, too, is impure…** The festive meal that should have been holy has been defiled on account of the individual’s voluntary bonding with the evil impulse.

The teaching “If one comes to purify himself…” derives from BT *Shabbat* 104a, in the name of Resh Lakish. On the

identification of צואה (*tso'ah*), "filth" (literally "excrement"), with the evil impulse, see *Zohar* 1:190b.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *Do not eat bread from evil eye, nor desire its delicacies* (Proverbs 23:6). On this verse, see *ZḤ* 87a (*MhN, Rut*). The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Surely all tables are full of filthy vomit, without a place* [or: *a space*].

386. **Holy angels and impure angels…** Angelic accompaniment is a feature of daily life, not just at the Sabbath meal, and so one must be ever vigilant in one's religious and ethical conduct.

On a person's two accompanying angels, see above, note 303.

387. **foul angels rule over him…** One who turns away from the blessed Holy One will be abandoned by God, even during times of misfortune.

The simple meaning of the verse in Isaiah reads: *Why have I come, when there is no man* [or: *one here*]? *Why have I called, when none responds*?

388. ***provides succor to the downtrodden…*** "Downtrodden" renders דל (*dal*), "poor, helpless, powerless," in the sense of being forsaken—that is, deprived of God's grace. Through his charitable giving, the righteous person prevents the indigent person from feeling resentment toward the blessed Holy One, bringing about peaceable relations with God.

The word מעוזי (*ma'uzi*), usually construed as *My refuge*, here signifies the Torah—which serves as a stronghold for those who hold fast to it. Someone who helps the indigent has demonstrated the Torah's concern—and thus reconciles that poor person with God.

On the term *dal*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:6; *Tanḥuma, Behar* 3; *Zohar* 2:218b, 233b. On *ma'uzi* in Isaiah 27:5 as signifying Torah, see *Targum Yerushalmi*; Radak, s.v. *be-ma'uzi*; Qara, s.v. *o yeḥazzeq be-ma'uzi*. On the righteous person as reconciling the indigent with God, see M Avot 2:7: "The

more charity [or: righteousness], the more peace." See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:16; *Zohar* 2:61a, 250b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 75c–d (*MhN, Rut*); cf. *Midrash Tehillim* 41:3.

The following homily is very similar to material found at *ZḤ* 75c–d (*MhN, Rut*).

389. **not in his right mind…** See BT *Bava Batra* 16b: "*Job speaks without knowledge, and his words are without any sense* (Job 34:35). Rava said, 'This teaches that a man is not held responsible for what he says when in distress.'" See also BT *Eruvin* 42b, in the name of the rabbis: "Three matters cause a person to act against his will and the will of His Maker, and they are: Gentiles, an evil spirit, and the depths of poverty."

390. ***from where does it come?…*** The meaning here is obscure, but the wordplay between the two verses suggests that the explanation for Job's suffering lies in the most recondite reaches of the Godhead—in *Ayin* itself, which designates either *Ein Sof* or *Keter*.

Job 28:20 reads in full: *But wisdom*—מאין (*me-ayin*), *from where, does it come, and where is the place of understanding?* The full verse in Job 2:3 reads: *Have you noticed My servant Job? For* אין (*ein*), *there is none, like him on earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and shuns evil and still clings to his innocence; and you incited Me against him to destroy him for nothing*.

On Satan's reply to God, see Job 1:9–11: *Satan answered YHVH, saying, 'Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not hedged him about and his household and all that he has all around? The work of his hands You have blessed, and his flocks have spread over the land. And yet, reach out Your hand, pray, and strike all he has. Will he not curse You to Your face?'*

391. ***Touch his bone…*** The full verses in Job (2:5–6) read: [*Satan said*,] '*Stretch out Your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your*

face.' *YHVH said to Satan, 'Here, he is in your hand—but spare his life*.'

392. **My father and mother fashioned my body…** Job complains about the fundamental injustice of the afflictions that the blessed Holy One has allowed against his body, as if his parents' contribution were insignificant.

See BT *Niddah* 31a: "There are three partners in [the creation of] a human being: the blessed Holy One, his father, and his mother. His father supplies the semen of white substance, out of which [are formed] bones, sinews, nails, the brain in his head, and the white of his eye; his mother supplies the semen of red substance, out of which [are formed] skin, flesh, hair, and the black of his eye; and the blessed Holy One gives him spirit and *neshamah*, beautiful features, eyesight, hearing, speech, the ability to walk, understanding, and discernment. When his time to depart from the world approaches, the blessed Holy One takes back His portion and leaves the shares of his father and his mother with them." See also BT *Qiddushin* 30b; *Zohar* 2:93a; 3:83a (*Piq*), 219b; *ZḤ* 16b (*MhN*), 56c, 75d (*MhN, Rut*).

Generally in the *Zohar*, the soul has three rungs: נפש (*nefesh*), "soul" (or "life"); רוח (*ru'aḥ*), "spirit"; and נשמה (*neshamah*), "holy soul" (or "breath"). *Nefesh*, the lowest of the three, vitalizes and animates the body through the performance of commandments. *Ru'aḥ* is the intermediate aspect, arousing the person through study of Torah and providing moral guidance. If a person is sufficiently animated through commandments and Torah, he will merit a higher soul—*neshamah*—overflowing from above. Here, the *Zohar* refers to only two of these three. On the three aspects of soul, see Vol. 11, p. 154, n. 361.

Job 10:3 reads in full: *Is it good for you to oppress, to spurn Your own palms' labor, and on the council of the wicked to shine*?

393. **A man who dies without sons…** The *Zohar* treats the commandment to procreate as one of the most important of all religious duties because it results in the perpetuation of the image of God. The man in question apparently deliberately neglected the commandment, eliciting the condemnation. If this wicked person leaves behind a son, however, the child's Torah learning propitiates God and mitigates the father's punishment.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *Hand to hand, evil will not go unpunished, but the seed of the righteous* נמלט (*nimlat*), *escapes*. The idiom *hand to hand* means "count on it; you can be certain." For the *Zohar*, it affirms divine justice even when not immediately apparent. Further, the counterposed mention of *hand to hand* and *seed* in that verse suggests that the man in question has died childless due to the sin of masturbation.

394. **There was a man…** The following story, often called "The Tanna and the Restless Dead," outlines a method for alleviating the suffering of a sinner in Geihinnom. The story enjoyed wide circulation in over forty versions in medieval folktales, liturgical works, midrash, ethical literature, and Kabbalah. The version in *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on *Rut* (84b–c) is longer and richer in detail, but also with important discrepancies; the version here may have served as the template for the one there. A number of the versions portray Rabban Yoḥanan son of Zakkai as the hero, while some have Rabbi Akiva. According to a variant reading in the Venice edition, it is two sages who accompany the protagonist.

The "craters with fiery fissures" renders גומין בקיעין דאשא (*gumin beqi'in de-asha*), which recalls the crevices encountered by Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose in the טורי קרדו (*turei qardu*), "mountains of Kurdistan," in *Zohar* 1:63a. See Vol. 1, p. 366, n. 178; Vol. 11, p. 180, n. 435.

On voices coming from beneath the ground, see BT *Sanhedrin* 110a, in the name of Rabbah son of Bar Ḥana: "I

was proceeding on the road, when an Arab said to me, 'Come, and I will show you where Korah [and his band were] were swallowed up.' I went and saw two craters, smoke billowing from them. Thereupon he took a piece of clipped wool, soaked it in water, attached it to the point of his spear, and passed it over there—and it was singed. I said to him, 'Listen to what you are about to hear.' And I heard them saying thus: 'Moses and his Torah are true, but they [Korah's company] are liars.'" Cf. BT *Eruvin* 19a, *Ḥagigah* 15b, *Bava Batra* 74a, *Sanhedrin* 65b.

On the story, see Lerner, "Ma'aseh ha-tanna ve-ha-met"; *Nispaḥim le-Seder Eliyahu Zuta, Pirqei Derekh Erets*, 22–23; *Kallah Rabbati*, 2:9 (Higger); *Ginzei Schechter*, 238–40; *Maḥazor Vitri*, 112–13; Isaac ben Moses, *Or Zaru'a, Hilkhot Shabbat*, vol. 2, 50; Abu Ḥamad al Ghazali, *Sefer Moznei Tsedeq*, 121; *ZḤ* 84b–c; Kushelevsky, "The Tanna and the Restless Dead"; idem, "Ha-tanna ve-ha-met ha-noded"; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-be-Nistar*, 116–18 n. 39; Weiss, "Shetei Girsa'ot"; Meroz, "The Grieving Dead."

395. **a man with a bundle of thistles...** This sinner had cavorted with "thistles"—a metaphor for his wicked cohort, either human or demonic. In a measure-for-measure punishment for this sinfulness, he is burdened with a bundle of burning thistles.

396. **Who are you?** On listening to and communicating with the dead, see BT *Berakhot* 18b, *Sanhedrin* 65b; Meroz, "The Grieving Dead," 49–50.

397. **my name...** According to a rabbinic tradition, the dead do not remember their names.

See *Massekhet Ḥibbut ha-Qever* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150); *ZḤ* 84c (*MhN, Rut*). On the daily punishments in Hell, see *ZḤ* 69a (*ShS*), 84c (*MhN, Rut*).

398. **judged for my mouth...** The various limbs of the sinner's body testify against him, enumerating his offenses. In rabbinic literature, Dumah is the angel in charge of souls of the dead. In the *Zohar* he retains this role but also

oversees Hell. Here, Dumah berates him for not fulfilling the Torah, which he was sworn to uphold as a fetus.

On the adjuration of the fetus, see BT *Niddah* 30b, in the name of Rabbi Simlai: "[The fetus] does not emerge from [the womb] before it is made to take an oath, as is said: *To Me every knee shall bend, every tongue swear loyalty* (Isaiah 45:23). *To Me every knee shall bend*—this is the day of dying, of which is said: *Before Him will kneel all who go down to the dust* (Psalms 22:30). *Every tongue swear loyalty*—this is the day of birth, of which is said *the clean of hands and the pure of heart—who has not sworn by his soul falsely, who has not sworn deceitfully* (ibid. 24:4). What is the oath that it swears? Be righteous, and do not be wicked; and even if all the world tells you, 'You are righteous,' consider yourself like a wicked person. Always bear in mind that the blessed Holy One is pure, that His ministers are pure, and that the soul which He gave you is pure. If you preserve it in purity, well and good; but if not, I will take it from you."

On "the skull that never put on tefillin," see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17a: "Rebellious Jews who have sinned with their bodies… descend to Hell and are judged there for twelve months. After twelve months, their bodies are consumed, their souls are burned, and a wind scatters them under the soles of the feet of the righteous, as is stated: *You will trample the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet* (Malachi 3:21). The rebellious Jews who have sinned with their bodies, who are they? Rav said, 'This refers to the skull that never donned tefillin.'"

On Dumah, see BT *Berakhot* 18b, *Shabbat* 152b, *Ḥagigah* 5a, *Sanhedrin* 94a; *Zohar* 1:8a–b, 94a, 102a (*MhN*), 121a (*Tos*), 124a (*MhN*), 130b, 237b; *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 99–100, 154; Weiss, *Kol Yoredei Dumah*, 18–22, 46–66. On the adjuration given the fetus, see *Seder Yetsirat ha-Vlad*, 157; *Zohar* 1:76b

(*ST*), 233b; 2:161b; 3:13a, 43a; *ZḤ* 47a, 75b (both *MhN, Rut*).

399. **the rebel's lashes…** According to rabbinic penology, lashes can be prescribed for anyone who violated a rabbinic decree. There is no fixed number for violation of rabbinic law, regardless of the severity of the offense. Here, the speaker claims that such a flogging was carried out in the afterlife, as a result of the testimony of two witnesses—the sinner's soul and his guardian angel.

In the verse from Micah, the simple sense of *her who lies in your bosom* is "your wife," but here the author is alluding to the soul, based on BT *Ḥagigah* 16a: "Perhaps you will say, 'Who testifies against me?'… The Sages say, 'A person's soul testifies against him, as is said: *From her who lies in your bosom guard the doors of your mouth*. What is it that lies in a person's bosom? You must admit it is the soul.'" See BT *Ta'anit* 11a; Rashi on the verse in Micah; *Zohar* 1:92a; 2:186a; 3:121b.

On rabbinic flogging, see, e.g., M *Nazir* 4:3; BT *Shabbat* 40b, *Yevamot* 52a, *Ketubbot* 45b, *Nazir* 23a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Sanhedrin* 16:3; 18:5.

400. **the slaughterhouse…** It is unclear what sinful behavior is associated with the father's being a butcher and the child's activity at the slaughterhouse. The word used below to describe his behavior—מְשַׂחֵק (*mesaḥeq*), "sporting"—could suggest idolatrous, murderous, or illicit sexual behavior, which in this case might suggest homosexual activity.

On the term *mesaḥeq*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 53:11. On the multiple curses to the child, father, and nursemaid, see BT *Sanhedrin* 52a.

401. **heard a child reciting…** On the oracular quality of children's recitation of verses, see BT *Bava Batra* 12b in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "Since the day that the Temple was destroyed, prophecy was taken away from the prophets and was given to idiots and children."

See JT *Shabbat* 6:9, 8c; cf. Augustine, *Confessions*, 8:12:29: “I heard the voice of a boy or a girl—I know not which—coming from the neighboring house, chanting over and over again, ‘Pick it up, read it; pick it up, read it.’” See Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, 195–98; Urbach, *The Sages*, 578–79.

The context in Proverbs (2:4–5) reads: *If you seek it like silver, search for it like treasure, then will you understand fear of YHVH and you will find the knowledge of God*. See Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*; Alter, *The Wisdom Books*, ad loc.

402. **to chant the *haftarah*...** As part of communal worship. A *haftarah* consists of the recitation of a customary passage from prophetic writings. It follows and concludes the Torah reading on the Sabbath and holy days.

On a minor’s chanting the *haftarah*, see M *Megillah* 4:5; BT *Megillah* 24a. In the parallel version in *Midrash ha-Ne’lam* on Ruth, the child does not perform any liturgical functions. See Vol. 11, p. 182, n. 442.

403. **I was released from judgment...** The orphan’s incremental advances in Torah knowledge are recompensed with the cessation of his father’s punishment, and his rising status in the world that is coming. This reversal in the afterlife demonstrates the remarkable effects of a child’s learning upon a parent’s spiritual stature.

On a sinner’s being redeemed by a righteous son learning Torah, see *Zohar* 1:115b, 188a; *ZḤ* 84c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 110; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 138. See also BT *Sanhedrin* 104a: “A son confers benefit onto his father.” Cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4.

On benefiting from *Shekhinah*, see above, note 379. On satiation from spiritual foodstuffs, see *Zohar* 2:61b–63a, 153a–b; 3:155b, 208a, 226a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 104–5; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Toledot Adam*, 62b; idem, *Sefer Tashaq*, 309; Isaac of Acre, *Sefer Me’irat Einayim*, 97; Hecker, *Mystical Bodies*, 57–81, 84–90. On

individualized portions in the world that is coming, see BT *Bava Batra* 75a; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 12–13; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 139.

404. **EIGHTEEN THOUSAND WORLDS** The following section is an abstruse discussion of the emanation of the *sefirot*. The number "eighteen thousand" apparently derives from the description of the idealized Jerusalem in Ezekiel 48:35: *The circumference* [*shall be*] *18,000* [*cubits*]; *and the name of the city from that day on shall be YHVH-Is-There*. Here, the *Zohar* interprets this idealized Jerusalem as a representation of the entire divine realm.

On the figure eighteen thousand, see also BT *Avodah Zarah* 3b, in the name of Rabbi Aḥa: "What does [God] do at night?... He rides his cherub of light and sails through 18,000 worlds." Cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 97b, where the figure denotes the number of righteous ones preceding the final redemption.

On the association of Jerusalem's measurements and God, see *Bava Batra* 75b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "Three were called by the name of the blessed Holy One, and they are the following: the righteous, the Messiah, and Jerusalem... as is written: *The circumference* [*shall be*] *18,000* [*cubits*]; *and the name of the city from that day on shall be YHVH-*שָׁמָּה (*Shammah*), *Is-There*. Do not read *shammah, Is-There*, but שְׁמָהּ (*shemah*), *is its name*."

On the eighteen thousand worlds, see *Zohar* 1:4b; 3:129a, 159a, 295b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 2d (*Mat*), 55c; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 298; idem, *Sefer Maskiyyot ha-Kesef*, 32.

405. **Before the blessed Holy One created His world...** Before causing the emanation of the *sefirot*, which are signified here by "world," God and His Name were the only existents. "Will" signifies *Keter*, and the images of "a point" and "palace" represent *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, respectively. The three "sides" who emanate afterward are *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

In Kabbalah, the *sefirot* are considered God's "names" since they reveal the divine identity. In particular, *Shekhinah*, the culminating expression of the *sefirot*, is called "the name" of God. Before the process of emanation, all of the *sefirot* existed potentially within *Ein Sof* or *Keter* or both.

For alternative sefirotic interpretations, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On God and his name as being the sole primordial existents, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3; *Zohar* 1:29a; *ZḤ* 2d (*MhN*); Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod, Ta'anit* 27b, p. 19d. On the Torah's being created before the world, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 37; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:4; BT *Pesaḥim* 54a, *Nedarim* 39b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:12; *ZḤ* 5a (*MhN*). Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:61. On *Shekhinah* as "the name" of God, see Deuteronomy's recurring locution for the Temple: "the place where *YHVH* your God will choose for his name *le-shakhen*, to dwell" (12:11; 14:23; 16:2; etc.).

406. **three points shot out...** This may be an alternate description of the process that was delineated in the previous paragraph. If so, the two that are emitted "in one aspect" signify *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, both of whom exist on the same plane, with *Tif'eret* located "below" and blending the impulses of the previous two. In a deliberately obscure formulation, the *Zohar* describes how "the point," namely *Ḥokhmah*, leaves its imprint within those three, even as it vanishes above in concealment.

Sullam and *Matoq mi-Devash* identify these three as *Ḥokhmah, Binah*, and *Da'at*, the hidden upper extension of *Tif'eret*.

407. **a single Lamp emerged...** This is the *Botsina* (or *Botsitsa*) *de-Qardinuta*, the "Lamp (or Spark) of Adamantine Darkness"—the luminous, invisible, divine instrument emerging from *Ein Sof* that measures—and in so doing, gives scale, shape, light, color, and (eventually) permanence to the *sefirot* below. It is often identified with the *Qav ha-Middah*, "the Line of Measure." The *Botsina de-Qardinuta* measures out a distance of one thousand worlds between two *sefirot*—

referring apparently to *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, or alternatively, *Keter* and *Ḥokhmah*. In some Zoharic texts, the *Botsina de-Qardinuta* serves as a contemplative instrument for the kabbalist to measure the divine form. See Liebes, *Peraqim*, 146–47; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 68–69; Wolfson, *Luminal Darkness*, 117; above, pp. 422–23, n. 20. See the Zoharic section entitled *Qav ha-Middah*, translated above, pp. 415–42, and especially nn. 1–2 there.

The phrase "no eye has seen" derives from Isaiah 64:3: *No eye has seen, O God, but You, what You will do for one who awaits You*.

408. **one thousand from within the second point…** One thousand worlds constitute the measurement of *Binah*, which is the second *sefirah* below *Keter*. A thousand is also a generic span for the size of a world (or *sefirah*) and for the distance between two separate worlds (or *sefirot*).

409. **two points were emitted…** Now the *Zohar* elucidates the generation of the lower seven *sefirot*. The "two points" are *Ḥokhmah* and *Ḥesed*, with *Ḥesed* serving as garment for *Ḥokhmah*; both are on the right side. *Ḥesed* is signified by "shining light" since it is the first of the lower seven *sefirot*, and it is represented by what is implicitly the first day of creation, during which light was created. The "other concealed point" designates *Binah*, who is clothed in *Gevurah*; both are on the left side.

On *Ḥesed* as the first day of creation on which light was created, see above, note 365.

410. **Concealed point that created all…** *Keter* initiates the emanation of all the *sefirot*; and because it stands atop the central axis, it generates *Tif'eret*, who stands in the middle between *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*.

411. **fashioned this artifact…** *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* are the two concealed points that were emitted from the higher concealed point, *Keter*. *Tif'eret* is the generative point below that functions like *Keter*. As *Keter* emanated the two points of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, so does *Tif'eret* emanate the two points of

Netsaḥ and *Hod*, which then serve as garments for *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*.

412. **essence of all…** *Tif'eret* is the central axis of all the *sefirot*; and it emanates *Yesod*, which stands in the middle between *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* on the right and left.

413. **these points are garments…** The six lower *sefirot* are called "points," but they are also "garments" for the three concealed *sefirot* above—*Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*. The "point… which is complete" refers to *Tif'eret*, which is usually represented by the biblical patriarch Jacob, who is described (see Genesis 25:27) as תם (*tam*), *complete* (or *without blemish, consummate, simple*).

414. **their garments are six…** The lower six *sefirot* are garments for the supernal three (see previous note). Each of *Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah* emanates two of the *sefirot* below, along their own axes—center, right, and left—and then dwells in the midst of the pair that it has generated.

415. **four of those points emanated…** two points… The identities of the "four points" and the "two points" here are obscure. *Sullam* and *Matoq mi-Devash* explain that the four points here are *Keter, Ḥokhmah, Binah*, and *Da'at*—the latter being the concealed upper extension of *Tif'eret*. According to that configuration, *Keter* and *Da'at* both participate in the emanation of *sefirot* along the central axis—namely *Tif'eret* and *Yesod* (or, alternatively, *Keter* generates *Da'at* and *Tif'eret*, while *Da'at* generates *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*).

416. **meting out one thousand…** Once the entire divine structure is traced out, the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness measures out one thousand worlds as the measurement of each of the lower *sefirot*, as it had done for the top three *sefirot*. Each of the *sefirot* now consists of an external aspect and an internal aspect: the worlds and the spark. The eight *sefirot* that were discussed in the previous paragraph have eight thousand outer worlds, plus another eight thousand for their inner aspect, yielding sixteen thousand in total.

On the *Botsina*, see above, note 407.

417. **two in the center…** *Tif'eret* and *Yesod* are the central *sefirot*; and since each of them has one thousand worlds, the total sum is eighteen thousand worlds.

418. **Of them all is written…** The verse from Ecclesiastes emphasizes the hierarchical nature of the entire sefirotic structure, while the verse from Isaiah stresses the recondite nature of the *sefirot*.

419. ***my lovers…*** Who are *my lovers*? The descendants of Abraham, whom God called *My lover*.

In rabbinic literature the verse in Proverbs is applied to the heavenly reward of the righteous. See above, note 197. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *You, Israel, My servant; Jacob, whom I have chosen—seed of Abraham My lover*.

420. **Ishmael… came from him…** Rabbi El'azar is astonished that his father seemingly suggested that all of Abraham's descendants were called *my lovers*. Certainly this could not be said of the descendants of Ishmael and Keturah (a veiled reference to Muslims)!

Rabbinic typologies treat Ishmael as wicked and as a blemish in his father's lineage; late midrashic works and kabbalistic symbolism represent Ishmael as the progenitor of Islam, and thus as an oppressor of the Jewish people through history. See *Tosefta Sotah* 6:6; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 31; *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:5; BT *Pesaḥim* 56a, *Nedarim* 31a, *Sanhedrin* 59b; *Zohar* 1:118b; 2:17a (*MhN*), 32a, 86a; 3:124a (*RM*), 148b (Vol. 8, p. 488, n. 92), 192b, 246b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 47a, 78d (last two *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 53–54 (66–68); Kiener, "The Image of Islam in the Zohar," 49–65; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 17–185.

On Keturah's descendants, see BT *Sanhedrin* 91a; Judah Barzillai, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 159; *Zohar* 1:100b, 133b, 223a.

421. **Elijah came…** Elijah is a frequent interlocutor of Rabbi Shim'on's in the *Zohar*, particularly in the later

strata. Here, Elijah affirms the insightfulness of El'azar's question, extending the pall already cast over Ishmael's descendants to those of Esau as well. Like Ishmael, Esau too is considered to be flawed offspring—this time from Isaac—and rabbinic and kabbalistic interpretations represent him as the figurehead of Christianity, another oppressor of the Jewish people through history.

The biblical prophet Elijah is a wonderworker who was miraculously fed while in hiding after his flight from murderous oppressors (1 Kings 17:6). His earthly life ended supernaturally, as he *ascended in a whirlwind to heaven*, in a fiery chariot drawn by horses of fire (2 Kings 2:1–11). In the Talmud, Elijah occasionally visits mortals and reveals knowledge of the heavenly realm (BT *Berakhot* 3a, *Ta'anit* 22a, *Ḥagigah* 15b, *Gittin* 6b, *Bava Metsi'a* 59b, 85b). Based on the promise of Malachi 3:23, Elijah came to be regarded as the forerunner of the Messianic era. In the midrashic collection *Tanna de-vei Eliyahu* (27–44), rabbinic figures have mystical communion with Elijah to enhance their study. See Ginzberg, *Legends*, 4:217–23; 6:331–34.

Elijah's sojourn in a cave (1 Kings 19:8–18) is echoed in the rabbinic story in BT *Shabbat* 33b of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai, who takes refuge, with his son El'azar, from the Romans in a cave (see below, note 505). At the end of the story, Elijah is the one who informs Rabbi Shim'on and his son, that they are free to leave.

In the *Zohar*, Elijah is neither human nor angelic, but rather *sui generis*. See *Zohar* 2:197a–b; 3:88b; *ZḤ* 84c (*MhN, Rut*). When Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai and his son El'azar are hiding in the cave, Elijah comes to visit them twice a day (*ZḤ* 69c, *ShS*). Elijah's primary role in the *Zohar*, however, is to reveal secrets to the sages. See *Zohar* 1:1b–2a, 100b (*MhN*), 151a, 217a; 2:210b, 216b; 3:221a, 231a, 241b; *ZḤ* 59d. See also *Zohar Shir ha-Shirim*, which is structured as a series of homiletical exchanges between Rabbi Shim'on and Elijah. Here in this section of *Zohar*

Ḥadash on the Torah Portions, Elijah appears as an interlocutor with some frequency.

On Elijah in the *Zohar*, see Mopsik, "Introduction" to *Le Zohar: Cantique des Cantiques*, 8–10; Asulin, *Ha-Parshanut ha-Mistit le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 232–36; Yisraeli, *Parshanut ha-Sod*, 65–68; Huss, *The Zohar: Reception and Impact*, 52–55; Vol. 11, pp. 356–57, n. 22.

On the unfit nature of Esau and his offspring, see sources in previous note; Vol. 11, pp. 51–52, n. 70. The context in Malachi (1:2–3) reads: *'I have loved you,' says YHVH. And you ask, 'How have You loved us?' 'Is not Esau Jacob's brother,' declares YHVH, 'yet I have loved Jacob, and Esau I have hated, and I have made his hills a desolation.'*

422. **Jubilee and Sabbatical Year…** In Kabbalah, the Sabbatical symbolizes *Shekhinah* (seventh of the lower *sefirot*), while the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah*, who is frequently characterized by the number fifty. Here, Rabbi Shim'on points out that the word יש (*yesh*), *substance*, is a *notariqon* (specifically an acronym), consisting of the two letters that begin the words יובל (*yovel*), "Jubilee," and שמיטה (*shemittah*), "Sabbatical Year." Kabbalistically, this word underscores the integration of the two cycles of years.

Souls of the righteous who observe the Sabbatical Year enjoy a renewal based on the eschatological vision in BT *Sanhedrin* 92a–b: "It was taught in the school of Elijah: The righteous whom the blessed Holy One will resurrect will… endure forever…. The blessed Holy One will provide them wings like eagles, and they will fly above the water, as is written: *They who await YHVH shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not grow weary; and they shall walk and not grow faint.*"

In the land of Israel, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). After seven Sabbaticals comes the

Jubilee, when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus 25:8–55).

423. **River of Fifty…** The renewal occurs not only within *Shekhinah*, signified by the Sabbatical Year, but also within the Jubilee, which is represented here as the Upper Garden of Eden, and symbolizing *Binah*. Within that garden is the River of Fifty—also called the River of Fire (or the Dinur River), where souls undergo ablutions of purification.

Binah is associated with the number fifty, based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu'el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world—all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)."

According to rabbinic tradition, the River of Fire (see Daniel 7:10) is formed from the sweat of the angelic beings carrying the Throne. The verse in Daniel reads: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him*. On souls being immersed in the River of Fire, see *Zohar* 2:211b; cf. above, page 474, n. 79.

424. **mystery of Sabbatical Year and Jubilee…** Sabbatical Year, representing *Shekhinah*, is further associated with the tetragrammaton's final letter *he*. Meanwhile Jubilee, signifying *Binah*, is identified with the tetragrammaton's first *he*. The names of each of the primary matriarchs ends with *he* except for that of Rachel. When she realized the importance of this letter (since the blessed Holy One receives the prayers of those whose name ends with it), she bequeathed to Jacob her maidservant Bilhah—whose name contains two instances of *he*.

425. **The end of יובל (*yovel*), Jubilee…** Rabbi Shim'on points out further that the word יובל (*yovel*), "Jubilee"—representing *Binah*—concludes with the letter ל (*lamed*); hence Rachel, like Leah, is connected to both *Shekhinah* and *Binah*.

The next section of *Zohar Ḥadash* on *parashat Be-har* (49d) is found also in *Zohar* 3:111a; the short fragment after that (49d–50a) appears also in 3:126a. For translations of those passages, see Vol. 8, pp. 219–22 and 304–5, respectively.

426. **deed and words…** In Zoharic Kabbalah, prayer consists of the external rite—the words of the liturgy—and intention of the heart. The "upper ones and lower ones" apparently refer to the upper and lower *sefirot*.

On the role of the heart in prayer, see *Zohar* 1:99b–100a, 115a, 155b (*Mat*), 220b (standard editions); 2:200b, 210a–b, 262b (*Heikh*); 3:99a, 105a, 112b, 121a, 183b–184a, 263a (*Piq*), 285a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:951–55. On the priestly blessing as affecting upper and lower *sefirot*, see *Zohar* 3:147a.

427. **looking toward his right side…** When the Temples stood, the priests would pronounce the blessing from Numbers 6:24–26. With the destruction of the Temple and the cessation of the sacrificial cult, this act of blessing became the main remnant of priestly ritual. It was inserted into synagogue liturgy before the last benediction of the *Amidah*.

While some countries retained a daily practice, some places in the Diaspora retained it only for Sabbath and Festivals, and in other places it was restricted to festivals alone. Significantly, the practice reported here appears to reflect medieval European practice—in which the prayer leader recites the blessing—rather than that of the land of Israel, where the priests themselves recited (and continue to recite) the blessing daily.

Here the prayer leader faces toward the right and then toward the left to elicit blessings from *Ḥesed* and then from *Gevurah*, effecting a submergence of *Gevurah* within *Ḥesed*. The antecedent for the pronoun דיליה (*dilei*), "his"—specifying whose left and right sides are intended—is ambiguous; the translation construes it as the prayer leader, but it can be read as God. The direction "toward the sanctuary"

apparently means eastward toward the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

On the priestly blessing, see M *Ta'anit* 4:1; JT *Berakhot* 5:4, 9c–d; BT *Ta'anit* 26b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah* 14–15; Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, 62–66. On facing right and left, see *Sullam*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 5; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the priestly blessing as eliminating judgment, see *Zohar* 3:147a.

The context in Numbers (6:22–27), describing the priestly blessing, reads: *YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, "Thus shall you bless the Children of Israel, saying to them:* [or: *Say to them:*] *May YHVH bless you and protect you. May YHVH shine His face upon you and be gracious to you. May YHVH lift up His face to you and grant you peace." They shall set My name upon the Children of Israel, and I Myself will bless them.'*

428. **comes to entice his Lord...** The key to *Taḥanun*—the ritual of prostration and petition that follows the statutory prayer—is the sincere willingness to suffer death for God's sake, and to perform that intention symbolically through prostration. The ritual action is described as enticement because one represents oneself as fully prepared to die, appearing as a desirable offering. The *Zohar* emphasizes that the act of surrendering one's soul during *Taḥanun* must be performed with complete devotion, and that any lack thereof ruins the practice.

This damage is extended here to a prayer leader who faces first toward the left and then the right in his recital of the priestly blessing, since that prevents the elimination of Judgment. See previous note.

The expression למפתי למאריה (*le-miftei le-mareih*), "to entice (or seduce; persuade; propitiate; sway; win over; win the favor of) his Lord," derives from rabbinic sources. See *Midrash Tehillim* 19:17, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "How mighty are the righteous, for they know how to entice their Creator!" See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:4

(variants); *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:4; *Zohar* 1:41a (*Heikh*); 3:121a; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 184, n. 154.

"Distant" renders רחיקא (*reḥiqa*), following the standard edition. Venice reads דחיקא (*deḥiqa*), "constrained, cramped." The verse in Psalm 78 concludes: *they were not faithful to His covenant*.

429. **Everything depends upon the essence of the deed...** Proper fulfillment of prayer (or any of the commandments) requires three components: deed, word, and devotion of the heart. If one fails to include these, then the prayer cannot be conveyed above, the individual has not fulfilled the commandment of prayer, and he will not be a fitting place for blessing to settle.

On the need for a proper place for blessing to rest, see BT *Berakhot* 40a, *Sukkah* 40a–b, *Sanhedrin* 92a; Naḥmanides on Exodus 25:24; *Zohar* 1:88b, 240a; 2:63b, 67a, 87b–88a, 153b–155a, 157b; 3:34a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 270; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 87–88; Joseph of Hamadan, *Sefer Ta'amei ha-Mitsvot*, 114–16; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 25:23; idem, "Shulḥan shel arba," 477; Caro, *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 180:2; Abraham Gombiner, *Magen Avraham*, ad loc.; Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*, 48; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 28; idem, *Minhag Ashkenaz ha-Qadmon*, 267–70; Hecker, *Mystical Bodies*, 142–62. Cf. *Zohar* 2:67a.

On the phrase "his worship is no worship," see Vol. 11, p. 146, n. 337.

430. **[55a]** *Zohar Ḥadash* on *parashat Ḥuqqat* is not included in this translation, on account of its appearing to be quite late in composition. See Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 219, who refers to this material as "imitations of the *Zohar*." See also Asulin, *Ha-Parshanut ha-Mistit shel Shir ha-Shirim*, 67.

The first part of *Zohar Ḥadash* on *parashat Balaq* (53b–d) appears also in *Zohar* 3:303a–b; likewise the material in *ZḤ* 53d–55b appears in *Zohar* 3:304a–305b. For those passages, see Vol. 9, pp. 311–19 and 341–59, respectively.

431. ***I see him…*** The context in Numbers (24:17–18) reads: *I see him, but not now. I gaze on him, but not soon. A star marches forth from Jacob, a meteor* [or: *a scepter*] *arises from Israel, and smashes the brow of Moab, the pate of* [or: *and razes*] *all the Sethites. Edom will be dispossessed, Seir dispossessed by its enemies; but Israel performs valiantly.*

432. **redemption for the fourth…** The verse from Numbers is often interpreted in Messianic terms. The *Zohar* explains that the current exile began with the destruction of the Temple in the fourth millennium, and redemption will only occur at the end of times. Other possible referents of the "fourth" include: the fourth exile, based on medieval interpretations of the book of Daniel; or *Shekhinah*, who is the fourth leg of the sefirotic throne.

On the Messianic symbolism of Numbers 24:17, see JT *Ta'anit* 4:6, 68d: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai taught: 'Rabbi Akiva interpreted *A* כוכב (*kokhav*), *star, marches forth from Jacob* to mean כוזבא (*kozeba*), *Kozeba, marches forth from Jacob.*' When Rabbi Akiva saw Son of Kozebah, he said, 'This is the king Messiah.' Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Torta retorted, 'Akiva, grass will grow out of your cheekbones before the Son of David comes.'" See *Targum Onqelos* and Naḥmanides on the verse; *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:4; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 2:2; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Devarim*, add. 6; *Zohar* 3:212b; *ZḤ* 55d. Cf. Revelation 22:16; *Targum Yerushalmi* on the verse; *Zohar* 1:119a; 2:7b–8a, 172b; Milgrom, *Numbers*, ad loc.

On Zoharic calculations of the date of the final redemption, see *Zohar* 1:116b–119a, 139a–b (*MhN*); 2:9b–10a; 3:249a, 251b–252a (last two *RM*), 270a.

433. **Six days comprise the world…** Kabbalistic texts construe the verse *Six days YHVH made heaven and earth* (Exodus 20:11) hyperliterally to suggest that *YHVH made six days*, that is, He emanated six cosmic "days" (usually, the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*), thereby generating *Tif'eret*

(*heaven*) and *Shekhinah* (*earth*). These six are understood further to refer to the six millennia that the world will exist.

In the description of the fourth day of Creation, the word מארת (*me'orot*), *lights*, is written without *vav*s, the expected vowel letters. This deficient spelling alludes to a lack: the light of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) had diminished, and Her union with *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *vav*) was disrupted. The void was filled by demonic evil or "curse": מארה (*me'erah*). The eclipse of the moon (and sun and stars) signifies the destruction of the Second Temple, which occurred in 70 C.E., toward the end of the fourth millennium after Creation. The Temple, too, was considered like the light of the world.

On the curse of the fourth day, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:3; BT *Ḥullin* 60b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 6, 51; Naḥmanides on Genesis 1:14; *Zohar* 1:19b–20a, 181a–b; 2:138a, 144b, 147b–148a, 219b; *ZḤ* 69b, 70d–71a (both *ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 189; idem; *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 91; Solomon ibn Adret in *Peirush ha-Aggadot* on BT *Ḥullin* 60b; Todros Halevi Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod, Ḥullin* 60b (31c); Liebes, "*de Natura dei,*" 47–54; Pedaya, "Shabbat, Shabbetai, u-mi'ut ha-yareaḥ," 157–58, 182–84; idem, *Ha-mar'eh ve-ha-Dibbur*, 234–35.

434. **He replied...** Rabbi Shim'on's interlocutor explains that parallel to the earthly destruction of the Temple, God overturned the celestial order, as well. (It is revealed below that Elijah is the speaker.) See *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:5: *He has profaned the kingdom and its leaders* (Lamentations 2:2). *He has profaned the kingdom*—Israel.... *And its leaders*—the celestial princes.... The blessed Holy One arose and changed the names of the angels, setting the angel who had dominion over water to have dominion over fire, and the one who had dominion over fire to have dominion over iron. When the [people] invoked their names below, the [angels] did not respond."

The maidservant and Edom signify Lilith and Samael, respectively; but Samael is also the archon of Rome and thus a representative of Christianity. Rome destroyed the Second Temple; and Christendom continued to oppress the Jewish people in Spain during the late thirteenth century, which is when much of the *Zohar* was composed.

"Convulsion" renders ערטירא (*artira*), which is apparently based playfully on ערער (*ʿrʿr*), "to undermine, upset, demolish." See Vol. 5, p. 36, n. 105; Vol. 6, p. 188, n. 236; Vol. 9, p. 99, n. 140; p. 140, n. 266; p. 313, n. 56; p. 329, n. 110; p. 333, n. 123; p. 389, n. 308.

Gabriel carries scribal instruments because he is the overseer of judgments. See BT *Sanhedrin* 21b, 95b; *Yoma* 77a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:3; *Zohar* 1:99a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 36b (*RR*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 24–31. The image of an angel with "scribal implements on his loins" presumably comes from Ezekiel 9:1–3, 11, which describes a divine agent in this manner. There the agent is designated as האיש (*ha-ish*)—as is Gabriel in Daniel 9:21.

435. **the four corners of the world...** The four directions symbolize four *sefirot—Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Malkhut*—and allude to the four patriarchs who represent them: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (or Moses), and David.

Aravot is the highest of the seven firmaments in rabbinic cosmology. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, in the name of Resh Lakish.

Matoq mi-Devash suggests that God adjures the angels of the four sides—Uriel in the east; Michael in the south; Gabriel in the north; and Raphael in the west.

436. **O East, East...** East is associated with *Tif'eret*, which is manifest on earth by Moses (and Jacob).

437. **you and I are exiled...** See BT *Megillah* 29a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them.

When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them. And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them."

For sources on *Shekhinah*'s going into exile with the people of Israel, see above, p. 445, n. 5; p. 451, n. 17.

438. **He tore His purple robe...** God's own likeness and all divine forms are embroidered (or embossed) upon His purple robe.

On Israel's bound hands, see *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; ibid. 2:6; *Zohar* 2:2b, 118b (*RM*); 3:20b, 45b; *ZḤ* 93a (*MhN, Eikhah*).

On God's purple robe, see *Midrash Tehillim* 9:13; *Zohar* 1:39a, 41a (last two *Heikh*), 61b, 224b; 2:8b; 3:140b (*IR*); *ZḤ* 70d (*ShS*); Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 13:11; Yuval, *Two Nations*, 95–99; Liebes, "Porphoryata shel Helena mi-Troya ve-Qiddush ha-Shem," 269–88.

439. **O South...** The south is associated with *Ḥesed*, which is manifest on earth by Abraham.

"Their strength sapped" renders ימינהון תבירין (*yeminhon tevirin*), literally "their right broken."

440. **O North...** The north is associated with *Gevurah*, which is manifest on earth by Isaac—the one "bound on the altar."

Falling "by the sword" may refer to the blessing that Isaac bequeathed to Esau, the symbolic progenitor of the Romans: *By your sword shall you live* (Genesis 27:40).

441. **O West...** The west is associated with *Shekhinah*.

On the expressions of love, see Song of Songs 5:2: *Open for me, my sister, my beloved, my dove, my perfect one!* On the "groaning of the wounded," see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 32 (in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina); *Devarim Rabbah* 2.

442. **My sister, my daughter, my love...** The litany of loving expressions is intended to arouse *Shekhinah*'s compassion. *Shekhinah* is represented as "four-sided"

(literally “square”), and as such She is able to reach out to the four sides of the world.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11. On *Shekhinah* as four-sided, see BT *Eruvin* 14a–b, 56b; *Bahir* 83 (114–16); *Ketem Paz* 1:15b (quoted above, p. 420, n. 15). Cf. *Zohar* 1:5b; 2:127a, 180a; *ZḤ* 105b (*Mat*).

443. **lifted up Her voice…** Upon hearing the charge given Her by the blessed Holy One, *Shekhinah* causes Her voice to be heard from on high, causing worlds to quake. It is from this height that Rachel, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, weeps for her “children”—the people of Israel in exile.

On the eighteen thousand worlds, see above, note 404. The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *Thus says YHVH: A voice is heard in Ramah* [or: *on a height*]*—wailing, bitter weeping—Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children, for they are no more*.

444. **As for the blessed Holy One…** The full verse in Isaiah 22 reads: *YHVH God of Hosts called on that day for weeping and mourning, for tonsuring and girding with sackcloth*.

On divine mourning for Israel’s suffering, see *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; 1:23; BT *Ḥagigah* 5b, *Avodah Zarah* 3b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 15:3; *Midrash Tehillim* 20:1; *Zohar* 1:210a–b; 3:75a.

“Convulsion” renders ערטורא (*irtura*), “upheaval, demolition,” following the printed version—though Cin3, Salonika, and Venice all read ערטולא (*irtula*), “naked.” See above, note 434.

445. **the blessed Holy One swore to Her…** The prophecy delivered to Jeremiah is in fact an oath that the blessed Holy One made to *Shekhinah*.

The context in Jeremiah (31:16–17) reads: *Thus says YHVH: Restrain your voice from weeping, your eyes from tears; for there is reward for your labor, declares YHVH: they will return from the land of the enemy. There is hope for your future, declares YHVH: children will return to their land*.

446. **the entire acrostic dirge…** God recited all of Lamentations 4, or perhaps all of the book of Lamentations —four of whose five chapters are based on an acrostic structure. Only then were all of the divine decrees regarding Israel's exile finalized.

"Dirge" renders אלייה (*ilyyah*), "elegy," possibly derived from Greek and Latin *elegia*. See *Esther Rabbah* 4:11; *Arukh*.

447. **Now I shall return…** This line—possibly an editorial intervention—does not appear in Salonika or the standard edition, but it is witnessed by both Cin3 and Venice.

448. ***he is no more…*** The word אינגו (*einennu*) is in the grammatical singular; in the simple meaning of the verse in Jeremiah, it refers distributively to *her children*, so it can be rendered *they are no more*. Rabbi Shim'on, however, reads the word literally: *He is no more*—referring to the blessed Holy One, who has retracted His protection, leading to Rachel's despondence on behalf of her people. Rachel, who symbolizes *Shekhinah*, anticipates the Messianic era when *Tif'eret* will return—an event represented as His remembering of *Shekhinah*, signified by the "Doe."

See *Zohar* 1:210a; 2:29b; 3:20b; *ZḤ* 92a–b (*MhN, Eikhah*). On *Shekhinah* as a Doe, see *Zohar* 1:4a; 2:7b, 10a–b, 36b, 46a, 52b, 56b, 119b (*RM*), 219b–220a; 3:13a, 21b, 25a–b, 68a, 249a–b; Liebes, *Pulḥan ha-Shaḥar*, 153–67. On the Doe and Israel's redemption, JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2c; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 6:10; *Midrash Tehillim* 22:13. On the passionate quality of the eschatological reunion, see BT *Sanhedrin* 106a; *Zohar* 3:95b, 270a.

449. **Oh, Rabbi!…** Elijah interjects in wonderment at the esoteric meaning of the verse.

450. **He opened…** The identity of the speaker is ambiguous, but it is probably Elijah. Primordial Adam, who signifies the divine anthropos, was created androgynous—with male and female aspects joined back to back. The

divine couple becomes the model upon which the human couple is based. God separated the two and then bedecked *Shekhinah* with jewelry and other adornments.

See *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5: "*Behind and in front You formed me* (Psalms 139:5). What is *behind and in front*? They were created [as a single creature] with two faces. So it was with Adam: behind him was the form of Eve—as is said: *YHVH Elohim built the side* [*that He had taken from the human into a woman*] (Genesis 2:22)."

The image of a couple being joined back-to-back and then sawed apart derives from *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1: "Rabbi Yirmeyah son of El'azar said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous, as is said: *male and female He created them* (Genesis 1:27).' Rabbi Shemu'el son of Naḥmani said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him with two faces. Then He sawed him and gave him two backs—one on this side and one on that.'"

On the identity of the speaker, see *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the adorning of Eve, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 18:1: "*YHVH Elohim fashioned the rib* (Genesis 2:22).... It was taught in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: 'He adorned her like a bride and brought her to him.'" Cf. BT *Berakhot* 61a.

On the androgynous nature of the human being, see above, p. 463, n. 51.

451. **how many enhancements...** *Shekhinah* was adorned with the diversity of interpretive methodologies. The six faces associated with the six orders of the Mishnah probably symbolize the six *sefirot* that flow into *Shekhinah*.

On the seventy faces of Torah, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:16, where Torah is compared to wine: "Just as יין (*yayin*), wine, is numerically equivalent to seventy, so Torah assumes seventy faces." See *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:354); *Sefer Ḥanokh* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:116); Ibn Ezra, introduction to *Commentary on the Torah*; *Zohar*

1:26a (*TZ*), 47b, 54a; 3:160a. Cf. *Zohar* 1:4b; 2:89a, 92b (*Piq*), 133b.

The number seventy appears in the context of revelation in BT *Shabbat* 88b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "Every utterance emerging from the mouth of Power branched into seventy languages [of humanity]."

The full verse in Genesis reads: *YHVH Elohim built the side that He had taken from the human into a woman, and He brought her to the human* (Genesis 2:22).

452. **Point of Zion…** "Point of Zion" signifies the center of the world, the site from which the world was created—and, as the Holy of Holies, the most sacred chamber of the Temple, the location of intimate union between the blessed Holy One and *Shekhinah*.

"Bridegrooms' blessings" refers to the seven blessings that are recited over a cup of wine under the wedding canopy during the marriage rite and after a festive meal during the week following a wedding.

On "Point of Zion," see *Tosefta Yoma* 2:14; JT *Yoma* 5:2, 42c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:4; BT *Yoma* 54b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 26:4; *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 10; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 35; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:4; *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:24–25); *Zohar* 1:71b–72a, 231a; 2:211a, 222a; 3:65b–66a; *ZḤ* 28a (*MhN*), 61a (*MhN, ShS*), 76a–b (*MhN, Rut*), 92c (*MhN, Eikhah*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 333; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 74–75 (95); Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-Fshutah*, 4:772–73; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:14–16, n. 39; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 372–73.

On the seven blessings, see BT *Ketubbot* 7b–8a; *Zohar* 2:102b, 169a–b, 255b (*Heikh*); 3:6a, 44b, 124a, 266b; *ZḤ* 89a (*MhN, Rut*).

453. **star that He took from Jacob…** Rabbi Shim'on explains that the *star* in the verse from Numbers actually designates *Shekhinah*, who is extracted (*marches forth*) from *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Jacob. The verse is interpreted to mean that the purpose of the separation of masculine and

feminine potencies of Divinity is to enable the Messiah—the one who will be revealed—to redeem the Jewish people. The Messiah signifies *Yesod*, called *covenant*, who manifests the fulfillment of *Tif'eret*, represented by "Tree of Life."

On the Messianic symbolism of the *star*, see above, note 432.

454. ***smashes the brow of Moab…*** When the Messiah arrives, Gentile oppression of the Jewish people will end. Their malevolence is represented as the wicked elements that cling to *Shekhinah*, designated by "Lower Tree," before She is reunited with *Tif'eret*. *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the word זאת (*zot*), *this*; here, the word *this* is juxtaposed with the word *time* to indicate that the Messianic era is the time of consummate adornment of *Shekhinah* and elimination of the pernicious influence of the Other Side.

The quotation from Genesis is part of Adam's exclamation upon the creation of Eve: *This one* [or: *This*] *at last, bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh! This shall be called woman, for from man was this taken*. On *Shekhinah* as *zot* (*this*), see *Zohar* 1:49b, 72a, 93b, 176b, 200b, 228a; 2:11b–12a, 37b, 39b, 50b–51a, 54b, 57a, 126b, 236b, 238b; 3:8b, 13b, 24a, 31a, 37b, 40b–41a, 48b, 52b–53b, 58b, 60b, 62a, 75b–76a, 79b, 108a, 115b, 145b–146a, 176a, 179b–180b, 201a, 250a.

455. **light of the speculum that shines…** *Shekhinah* is derived from *Tif'eret*, who is called the "speculum that shines," and that is why She is designated by the derivative formulations of *bone of my bones* and *flesh of my flesh*. Once the divine couple is established, destruction will be wrought against Israel's enemies.

On the image of the "speculum that shines," see above, note 331; Vol. 10, p. 281, n. 25.

The full verse in Daniel reads: *In the days of those kings, the God of Heaven will establish a kingdom that will never be destroyed, a kingdom that will not be left to another people. It will crush and wipe out all these*

kingdoms, and will itself endure forever. On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:145b; Scholem, “Parashah Ḥadashah,” 443 (Vol. 10, p. 562).

456. **vision that I will behold…** *Shekhinah* fervently anticipates the building of the Third Temple, at which time She will be reunited with Her lover, *Tif’eret*. She did not enjoy a lasting union with *Tif’eret* in the First Temple—nor in the Second, which was built by those who returned from the Babylonian exile. Both of these Temples were destroyed on account of Israel’s transgressions.

On the description of erotic union as “face-to-face,” see *Zohar* 3:262a (*IR*); *ZḤ* 62c, 72b (both *ShS*).

457. **beasts** A metaphor for the Gentile nations.

458. **At that time…** The timing here is obscure. Rabbinic traditions dispute whether the fiftieth year of the first Jubilee counts toward the first Sabbatical year of the second Jubilee cycle, or if each Jubilee year is a full fifty-year cycle. Following the first opinion, the Sabbatical and Jubilee years will coincide precisely every seventh Jubilee cycle.

According to the reading here, since the sixth millennium began, corresponding to the year 1240 C.E., 274 years later would be the year 1514. An editor’s comment in the Venice edition (1658) argues that the figure 274 is a scribal error based on the wrong understanding of the halakhic debate, and that the correct figure should be 384, arriving at the year 1624.

See JT *Qiddushin* 1:2, 59a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shemittah ve-Yovel* 10:7; *Tosafot, Avodah Zarah* 9b, s.v. *hai me’an*; Gordon, *Naḥal Eden*, 13c–d; *Nitsotsei Zohar*, nn. 14–15.

459. **the seal of Her image…** This imagery through the end of the paragraph is an Aramaic recasting of Song of Songs 8:6: *Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm. For love is as fierce as death, its jealousy bitter as Sheol. Its sparks are fiery sparks, a devouring flame*.

460. **sea serpent…** This sea monster appears to be a benign version of Leviathan—the fearsome creature whose meat, according to rabbinic tradition, will be served at the banquet for the righteous in the world that is coming. Here this creature performs the eschatological task usually reserved for Elijah: clarifying unresolved Talmudic debates. The presence of a second such creature reflects the legend in which God castrated the male sea creature and killed the female.

On the Leviathan, see Isaiah 27:1; Psalms 74:14; 104:26; Job 41; BT *Bava Batra* 74b; *Zohar* 2:34a–35b (Vol. 4, pp. 148–59 and nn. there); Fishbane, *Biblical Myth and Rabbinic Mythmaking*, 273–92. Cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 97b. For a highly detailed kabbalistic interpretation of this passage, see *Matoq mi-Devash*.

461. **three braids…** *Matoq mi-Devash* explains that these three "braids" are illuminations that derive from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the three who were summoned earlier by the blessed Holy One's cries. Then they enter the Palace of Love, where they remain until the end of days.

On the Palace of Love, see *Zohar* 1:44b–45a (*Heikh*); 2:97a, 146b, 253a, 254b, 260b (last three *Heikh*); 3:267b.

462. **two academies…** There are two celestial academies: one headed by the blessed Holy One, and the other headed by Metatron.

On the two academies, see *ZḤ* 36b (*RR*). On Metatron's house of study specifically, see *Zohar* 1:24a (*TZ*); 2:169b; 3:186a, 197b; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 98–100.

463. **She used to sit only in the hiddenness of the inner stairway…** When the Temples stood, *Shekhinah* was able to maintain appropriate dignity and modesty; but ever since Her children, the people of Israel, went into exile, She is like a distraught woman, forever worried about their welfare.

According to 1 Kings 6:8, a spiral staircase led from one chamber to another within the Temple; here it is called the

“inner stairway.” See Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 8:3:2: “The king (Solomon) also had a fine contrivance for an ascent to the upper room over the temple, and that was by steps in the thickness of its wall.”

464. **raising Her up from the dust…** See BT *Berakhot* 4b: “Rabbi Yoḥanan asked, ‘Why is there no [verse beginning with the letter] *nun* in *Ashrei* [Psalms 145]? Because it contains the downfall of “the enemies of Israel” [a euphemism for Israel itself]. This is as is written: נפלה (*Nafelah*), *She has fallen, and she will rise no more* (Amos 5:2). In the West [in the land of Israel], they reinterpreted it: *She has fallen* but *she shall fall no more; Rise, O Virgin Israel!*’ Rav Naḥman son of Yitsḥak said: ‘Even so, David went and supported them through holy spirit, as is said [in Psalms 145:14]: *YHVH supports all who fall*.’”

Cf. 1 Samuel 2:8 and Psalms 113:7; *Zohar* 1:170a. See *Zohar* 2:7a, 239b–240a; 3:6a–b; cf. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23; Vol. 7, p. 22, n. 70. “Unique nation” derives from 2 Samuel 7:23: *Who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on earth*?

On the travails preceding the arrival of the Messiah, see BT *Sanhedrin* 97a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “In the generation when the Son of David will come, scholars will be few in number; and as for the rest, their eyes will fail through sorrow and grief. Multitudes of trouble and evil decrees will be promulgated anew—each new evil coming with haste before the other has ended.” On the wars of the Messianic age, see BT *Sanhedrin* 97a–b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Melakhim* 12:2; *Zohar* 1:139b (*MhN*); 2:7b.

465. **trials…** This renders the term נס (*nas*), understanding it as a noun derived from the verbal root נסי (*nsy*), “to try, test.” See *Targum Onqelos*, Deuteronomy 28:56; *Targum*, Esther 5:14; BT *Sanhedrin* 107a. Cf. *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

466. **In the third month…** The date and time specified alludes to the beginning of the "three days of separation"—the days that preceded God's revelation to Moses at Sinai, during which time the husbands were charged to separate from their wives (see Exodus 19:15). Here, this dating turns the visit to Moses into a recurrence of the events preceding revelation.

Nine and one-half hours is the time, according to rabbinic tradition, at which the afternoon sacrificial offering was brought to the altar in the Temple. While the rabbis are not allowed to enter Moses' crypt, *Shekhinah* does—causing (presumably) the soul of the Messiah to emerge.

On the timing of revelation and the three days of separation, see Exodus 19:1–15.

"The shepherd, faithful member of the household" renders רעיא מהימנא דביתא (*ra'aya meheimna de-veita*), which could also be parsed as "faithful shepherd of the household." On Moses as "faithful shepherd," see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6; *Sifrei Zuta* 27; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; *Esther Rabbah* 7:13; *Rut Rabbah, Petiḥta* 5. Cf. Philo, *De Vita Moses* 1:60–62; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 7; *Shemot Rabbah* 2:2–3; *ZḤ* 105c (*Mat*). "Faithful Shepherd" (*Ra'aya Meheimna*) is also the title of one of the later strata of Zoharic literature.

467. **they join together…** In Moses' erotic union with *Shekhinah*, he manifests his role as איש האלהים (*ish ha-Elohim*), *husband* [or: *man*] *of God* (Deuteronomy 33:1; Psalms 90:1), or "Master of the House." Their conjugation leads to the descent of the blessed Holy One, and to His conveying of "lovers"—signifying Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who in turn symbolize *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. The Messiah joins them; and together they learn esoteric lore. Presumably they do so not only because such study is a kabbalistic value, but also because—according to rabbinic teaching—Torah study will spare one from the "birth pangs" of the Messiah's advent (see below, note 479).

On Moses' relationship with *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 488, n. 122; Vol. 6, pp. 103–4, n. 128. On Torah study as protection from Messianic travails, see BT *Sanhedrin* 98b.

468. **When first light rises…** This occurs on the apocalyptic day of redemption, which resembles the event that is commemorated by the festival of Shavu'ot, namely the giving of the Torah. The *Zohar* here considers a series of threes to be interrelated: three days before the giving of the Torah; three iterations of the word קול (*qol*), [*shofar*] *blast*; three proclamations from the *herald* in the verse in Isaiah; and the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. See Exodus 19:16, 19: *It happened on the third day when it became morning, that there were* קולות (*qolot*), *blasts* [or: *sounds, voices, thunderings*], *and lightning and a heavy cloud on the mountain and the* קול (*qol*), *blast, of a shofar, very strong… The* קול (*qol*), *blast, of the shofar was growing* [literally: *traveling*] *stronger and stronger. Moses would speak, and God would answer him* בקול (*ve-qol*), *with a blast*.

The *herald* in the verse in Isaiah is gendered feminine in Hebrew, signifying *Shekhinah*; and Her three proclamations —associated with those three shofar blasts, corresponding to *Ḥesed*, and *Gevurah*, as represented by Abraham and Isaac, and *Tif'eret*, signified by both Jacob and Moses—arouse them to convey divine overflow to Her below. She Herself is symbolized by the traveling shofar, which comes from interpreting קול השופר הולך (*qol ha-shofar holekh*) hyperliterally as *the blast of the shofar traveling*; and She receives the power for those shofar blasts from the supernal *teru'ah*, signifying *Tif'eret*.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Ascend a lofty mountain, O herald of joy to Zion; raise your voice with power, O herald of joy to Jerusalem! Raise it, have no fear; announce to the cities of Judah: Behold your God!* The full verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall sound a blasting shofar; in the seventh month on the tenth of the month, on the Day of Atonement, you shall sound a shofar throughout your land*.

469. **Small Shofar… Great Shofar…** These two shofars represent *Shekhinah* and *Binah*, respectively. The first appears in the episode at Mount Sinai, prompting the conveying of Torah from above. The Great Shofar derives from Isaiah 27:13: *On that day a great shofar will be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and bow down to YHVH on the holy mountain in Jerusalem*.

Mobility connotes mutability and the diverse forms of beauty within *Shekhinah*. Immobility symbolizes the more mysterious and recondite *Binah*, and it is associated with the ultimate redemption.

On the *great shofar* as *Binah*, see *Zohar* 2:46b; 3:6b, 99b, 266b. The tenth blessing of the daily statutory prayer begins: "Sound a great shofar for our freedom…."

"Tremolos of the Embouchure" renders תנועי דבוצינא (*tenu'ei de-votsina*), or "vibrations [or: resonance] of the horn"—referring to the way in which one moves one's lips and other parts of the mouth while sounding a shofar. The word בוצינא (*botsina*) here is understood as deriving from the Spanish term *boca*, "mouth," or from the Spanish *bocina*, "horn." See Scholem, *ZḤ*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 135.

470. **numerous sinners in the Holy Land will die…** On that apocalyptic day, the wicked will perish, and the prayers of Israel will be answered. Moses and the patriarchs (representing *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*) gaze appreciatively at each other, signifying the reciprocal conveyance of divine overflow. The Messiah, possibly symbolizing *Yesod*, joins them in a fuller manifestation of divine unity.

471. **the Messiah who was anointed…** There is a legend in rabbinic literature that the Messiah will be a descendant of the wicked king Jeroboam, an idea that appears numerous times in the *Ra'aya Meheimna* and later kabbalistic tradition. Rabbinic and medieval Jewish works also attest to a tradition of two messiahs: "Messiah, son of

Joseph," who would be oppressed and suffer, ultimately dying in battle; and "Messiah, son of David," who would bring the ultimate historical redemption. In some traditions, the earlier messiah is called "Messiah, son of Ephraim" (the son of Joseph).

Jeroboam's only righteous child, Abijah, died young and —unlike the king's other children—received a proper burial. The claim here is that before his death, he fathered the child destined to be Messiah, son of Ephraim. This is the first passage in Jewish literature that refers to Messiah, son of Abijah son of Jeroboam.

On Messiah, son of Joseph, see BT *Sukkah* 52a; *Sefer Zerubbavel* (in *Beit ha-Midrash* 2:56); *Zohar* 3:164a, 166a, 203b, 252a, 276b, 278b–279a (all *RM*); Vol. 11, p. 82, n. 157. On the Messiah, son of Ephraim, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 40:11; *Midrash Tehillim* 60:3; *Midrash Aggadah, Bereshit* 48:12; *Midrash Rabbi Shim'on bar Yoḥai* (in *Beit ha-Midrash* 3:80); *Zohar* 2:120a (*RM*); 3:153b, 223a, 242b, 243b (all *RM*).

On the "seven faithful shepherds" and the end of days, see BT *Sukkah* 52b: *"And this shall be peace: When the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight princes among men* (Micah 5:4). Who are these seven shepherds? David in the middle; Adam, Seth, and Methuselah to his right; Abraham, Jacob, and Moses to his left."

On the Messiah's descending from Jeroboam, see Abraham Azulai, *Zohorei Ḥamah* on 2:120a; Galante in Azulai, *Or ha-Ḥammah* on *Zohar* 2:120a; Vital, *Sha'ar ha-Gilgulim*, intro 33; Scholem, *ZḤ*; *Nitsotsei Zohar* n. 5; Green, "Nahman of Bratslav's Messianic Strivings," 429–31, n. 34.

472. **prophecy for the future…** This prophecy was uttered by Ahijah to Jeroboam's wife. He foretold that the sick Abijah would soon die, but in doing so he did not refer

to the prince by name. Rather Ahijah called him *the child* (1 Kings 14:12). According to the *Zohar*'s interpretation, the prophet used this vague term in order to simultaneously foretell the premature death of the Messiah, son of Ephraim, who would descend from Abijah's son, in the distant future. On Abijah's sickness and death, see 1 Kings 14:1–18.

473. **the blessed Holy One has summoned His Doe…** The result of the apocalypse is that *Shekhinah*, represented by the "Doe," will be reunited with the blessed Holy One. Until the process is finalized, however, the people of Israel will continue to be persecuted. Once their prayers are answered, it appears, the ideal equilibrium is restored: the Temple, called *Shekhinah*'s "House," is rebuilt, and She returns to Her earthly home; the patriarchs, symbolizing *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, return to their proper positions; and the Messiah, too, goes back to his cave.

It is unclear to which nations "land to the north and in the kingdom of the south" refers, but the passage in *Zohar* 2:32a also refers to "a single nation from the ends of the earth," which may refer to the Mongols. See Kiener, "The Image of Islam," 51*.

474. ***Shekhinah* will journey to Moses…** Moses here may signify *Tif'eret*, or he may represent only himself; according to either interpretation, it is difficult to track the story's continuity. Moreover, it is not clear whether this prediction of suffering and martyrdom derives from an earlier tradition, or if the events described here reflect actual historical events that had occurred in medieval Spain.

475. **like horns of the wild ox** The imagery derives from the blessings that Moses conveys to the descendants of Joseph, emphasizing Joseph's superior status among the brothers. The Messiah will come as God's agent to avenge the cruelties imposed upon the people of Israel; the latter

are associated here with *Shekhinah* (often called Assembly of Israel), who is designated "Small Shofar."

See Deuteronomy 33:13, 15–17: *For Joseph he said, 'Blessed of YHVH is his land… from the top of the age-old mountains, from the bounty of hills everlasting, from the bounty of earth and its fullness and the favor of the bush-dwelling One. May these come on the head of Joseph, on the brow of him set apart from his brothers. His firstling bull* [or: *ox*] *is his glory; wild ox's antlers, his horns. With them he gores peoples, all together, the ends of the earth.'* On the horn as a sign of the Messianic age, cf. Ezekiel 29:21.

476. **The Small Shofar will sound…** Once again, *Shekhinah*, represented by "Small Shofar," will call out to *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* with these three shofar blasts. With the sounding of the shofar and the raising of the Messianic flag, the world will recognize the one true God.

477. **abominations will be eradicated…** The mosque that sits on the Temple Mount (as well as other foreign houses of worship) will be razed so that the Temple can be rebuilt in its place. At that time all people will be able to worship fittingly in Jerusalem.

According to traditional Jewish chronology, the world was created less than 6000 years ago, at a date ostensibly corresponding to 3761 B.C.E. Hence, the fifth millennium corresponds to the years 240/41 C.E.-1239/40 C.E.; the sixth millennium begins in 1240 C.E.; and the seventh millennium begins in 2240 C.E.

On the significance of the sixth millennium, see BT *Sanhedrin* 97a: "Rav Kattina said, 'The world will exist for six thousand years and for one thousand lie desolate, as is written: *YHVH alone will be exalted on that day* (Isaiah 2:11).'… The Tanna from the House of Elijah teaches, 'The world is to exist six thousand years. In the first two thousand, there was desolation; two thousand years, Torah; and the next two thousand years is the Messianic era.'" See

Zohar 1:119a, 127b–128a, 139b–140a (last two *MhN*); 2:9b–10a. Cf. *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdTs*).

The Munkacz edition, published with emendations by Rabbi Natan Shapira in 1911, concludes the paragraph by specifying that the date of redemption will be fifty-nine years into the sixth millennium—specifically the sixteenth of Tishrei, 1298, a few years after sections of what would become the *Zohar* began to appear. Scholem understands the text to mean that the battles occurred in the year of the sixth millennium, the year 1240. See *Zohar* 3:249a, 252a (both *RM*); Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation*, 90–92; Scholem, *ZḤ*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:71.

On the Ishmaelite battles, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* (Friedlander) 30, (Higger) 29; *Zohar* 1:119a; 2:32a (Vol. 8, pp. 95–97, and n. 123); 3:93b.

478. **In the month of Bul...** This is a pre-exilic name for the month usually known as Ḥeshvan (see 1 Kings 6:38). This paragraph alludes to battles of the Crusades, in which the Christians (symbolized by Edom) fought with the Muslims (the Ishmaelites) to gain—and later maintain—control over the Holy Land. After various battles, the coastal city of Acre was captured by the Crusaders in 1104, recaptured by the Muslims in 1187, retaken by the Crusaders in 1191, and then conquered and destroyed by the Muslims in 1291, effectively eliminating Christian dominion in Palestine. As for Jerusalem, the Crusaders captured it in 1099, and it gradually became the capital of the Crusader Kingdom. In 1187, Saladin reconquered Jerusalem, which remained in Muslim hands until 1229, when it was divided between the two powers. In 1244, Jerusalem was attacked by the Turks, in league with the rulers of Egypt. Then in 1250 the city became part of the Mamluk kingdom—and remained so until the sixteenth century, when the Ottomans took control. None of these periods of domination was as short as twelve months.

These references to Muslim rule and the Crusades played a significant role in the scholarly dating of the *Zohar*. See Emden, *Mitpaḥat Sefarim*, 21–22; Kunitz, *Sefer Ben Yoḥai*, 73a; Steinschneider; *Polemische und apologetische Literatur*, 361; David Luria, *Ma'amar Qadmut Sefer ha-Zohar*, 76–78; Franck, *The Kabbalah*, 60–61; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 186; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:68–71; Kiener, "The Image of Islam," 49–53. On the international wars of Islam, see also *ZḤ* 70a (*ShS*).

479. **concealed for nine months…** The chaos that prevails before the advent of the Messiah is compared to birth pangs. Pregnancy itself serves as a metaphor for the Messiah's concealment before he comes to redeem Israel.

On the birth pangs preceding the advent of the Messiah, see BT *Sanhedrin* 98b. On the Messiah's concealment, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Rut Rabbah* 5:6; *Zohar* 2:7b.

480. **holy tree…** *Shekhinah* is represented here as a tree, which functions as a home for the souls of Israel. She is surrounded by "diagonals" (usually twelve), which are the dimensions of the supernal realm. Seventy archons oversee the seventy nations, and they encircle the tree's seventy branches. After the extended period of oppression, the blessed Holy One calibrates the nations' brutality using the measure of divine diagonals—and finds them to have been excessively harsh. In retribution He pares them away from the tree, cutting them off from sustenance.

On the pruning of the branches, see BT *Sanhedrin* 98a, in the name of Rabbi Hama son of Ḥanina: "The Son of David will not come until even the pettiest kingdom ceases [to have power] over Israel, as is written: *He shall trim away the sprigs with pruning hooks, and lop off the trailing branches* (Isaiah 18:5), and afterward, *In that time tribute shall be brought to YHVH of hosts* [*from*] *a people far and remote* (ibid., 7)."

The term אלכסונין (*alakhsonin*), “diagonals,” recalls the twelve גבולי אלכסון (*gevulei alakhson*), “diagonal borders” (edges of a cube), mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1. It refers to the twelve boundaries deployed to establish the twelve constellations and the twelve primary organs of the human body, which are associated with the twelve simple letters of the Hebrew alphabet. For sources, see Vol. 11, p. 354, n. 17. On the tree, cf. *Zohar* 1:76b (*ST*).

481. **branches broke…** Even in their defeat, the other nations and their archons will continue to inflict damage upon the Jewish people. As a final punishment, the angels in question will be immersed in the River of Fire (or Dinur River).

On this fiery river, see above, note 423; Vol. 11, p. 149, n. 345.

482. **seventy years in the sixth millennium…** The Messiah will rule—or live—for seventy years. (The Salonika edition does not include the words “seventy years.”) Alternatively, the Messiah’s rule will begin in the seventieth year of the sixth millennium, corresponding to the year 1310–11.

On the Messiah’s living for seventy years, see BT *Sanhedrin* 99a. On the Messiah’s beginning to rule in 1310, see Scholem, *ZḤ*. On the verse from Psalms, see *TZ* 2, 67b. The “nine verses” do not include the title verse (20:1)—*For the leader. A psalm of David*—but that verse’s three Hebrew words are included in the count of “seventy words.” On the battles and oppression during this nine-month period, see “Ottot ha-Mashiaḥ” (in *Beit ha-Midrash* 2:58–59).

483. ***fear of YHVH…*** This formulation itself designates *Shekhinah*. Since the sixth millennium begins in the year 1240 C.E., this prediction of the Messianic arrival corresponds to the year 1300/01. At that point, the people of Israel will all go to the land of Israel.

The abrupt ending of this section may indicate that subsequent material was lost.

484. ***women who have not yet known lying with a male…*** The verse in its context (Numbers 31:17–18) reads: *Every woman who has known a man by lying with a male, kill! All the little ones of the women who have not yet known lying with a male, let live*.

The main body of the *Zohar* does not otherwise have a section that addresses *parashat Mattot*. This passage was first printed in *Zohar Ḥadash*, and only then in the later printed editions at 3:259b, though not in Mantua or Cremona. No extant manuscript with this material has been identified.

485. **wise-hearted woman…** Alluding to *Shekhinah*. She runs the world with wisdom while absorbing the two primary colors of white and red—signifying *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, respectively. The women in the biblical story wove the fabrics for the tabernacle, and they brought threads of turquoise and purple specifically because these two are included in other colors. Turquoise manifests Judgment—as does black, which is associated with *Shekhinah*; and purple symbolizes *Tif'eret*. White and red thus express the balancing of Love and Judgment that are manifest by *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* above. *Shekhinah*'s blending of these two is indicated also by the mixing of wool and flax, which are typically white and black.

486. **They spun…** With the two materials, to balance love and judgment.

487. **why is she called woman?** The word אשה (*ishah*), "woman," is derived from the word איש (*ish*), "man." The term *ishah* does not apparently convey the balance of these two opposing forces. See Genesis 2:23: *This shall be called* אשה (*ishah*), *woman, for from* איש (*ish*), *man, was this taken*.

The biblical vocalization of *ishah* indicates the Masoretes' belief (and that of modern lexicographers) that this word actually derived from a different root than did *ish*. The coincidence that two distinct words came to be similar-sounding counterpart terms (already long before the Bible

was composed) is what prompts the biblical, midrashic, and kabbalistic explanations.

488. **encompassed within Judgment…** See BT *Niddah* 31a (quoted above in full, note 392): "… father supplies the semen of white substance…. mother supplies the semen of red substance…." White symbolizes love, and red symbolizes judgment. Thus, when a woman unites with a man ("tastes from the side of white"), she is defined by the influence of *Ḥesed* from him, and the influence of *Gevurah* that is indigenous to her. In that blend, *Ḥesed* dominates—and this explains why the name *ishah* is derived from *ish*, "man."

489. **right and left…** All of existence can be divided along the lines of this binary. Since coitus defines the nature of a woman, then if a woman—who is by nature identified with judgment—has sexual relations with a Jewish man, the judgment within her is contained within the compassion from the man. If a Gentile woman, however, receives further spiritual influence from the left side through sexual relations with a Gentile man, she compounds the effects of judgment and can no longer be redeemed.

Rabbi Yehudah asks why these women are forbidden, expanding the discussion to all Gentile women, rather than dwelling on the simple meaning of the verse regarding Midianite women—which stresses that all who had sexual relations with a man must be extirpated. This is likely a byproduct of the *Zohar*'s repeated emphasis prohibiting Jewish men from pursuing sexual relations with Gentile women. See above, note 82.

See Jonah Gerondi, *Sha'arei Teshuvah* 3:131: "One who cohabits with a maidservant is like those liable for the death penalty…. As our sages, of blessed memory, said, 'One who cohabits with a Gentile woman should be struck down by zealous ones' (BT *Sanhedrin* 81b), as is written: *He stabbed the two of them* (Numbers 25:8)."

On the effects of sleeping with a Gentile, cf. BT *Sotah* 3b: “Rabbi Shemu’el son of Naḥmani said in the name of Rabbi Yonatan: ‘Whoever fulfills a single commandment in this world—it ushers him into the world that is coming…. And whoever commits a single transgression in this world—it clasps him and ushers him into the Day of Judgment….’ Rabbi El’azar says, ‘It is attached to him like a dog; as is said [regarding Joseph resisting Potiphar’s wife]: *He would not listen to her, to lie beside her, to be with her—to lie beside her* in this world; *to be with her* in the world that is coming.’”

On the nature of dogs, see BT *Beitsah* 25b, in the name of Resh Lakish: “There are three distinguished in impudence: Israel among the nations, the dog among animals, and the cock among birds.” See *Shemot Rabbah* 42:9; *Zohar* 2:65a, 121b; *ZḤ* 60c (*MhN, ShS*). Cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 108b.

490. **one who lies with a Jew…** The souls of (male) Jews derive from Living *Elohim* (representing either *Binah* or *Shekhinah*). Consequently, sexual intercourse with a Jewish male implies cleaving with God. A *neshamah* is encased by *ru’aḥ*—apparently referring to male and female, respectively—in this world; that is a fitting union that appears *before* God.

The verse in Isaiah reads (according to its simple sense): *For* *ruaḥ*, *spirit*, יעטף (*ya’atof*), *would grow faint, before Me*, ונשמות (*u-nshamot*), *and the souls, that I have made*. Rabbi Yehudah understands *ya’atof* according to a different meaning of the root עטף (*’tf*), “to wrap, envelop,” and with transitive valence. Cf. *Zohar* 2:99b.

On a woman’s cleaving to a Gentile man, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 80:11, in the name of Rabbi Ḥunia: “A woman who has lain with a foreskinned one—it will be hard to detach.” On foreskin as the paradigmatic symbol for Gentiles, see above, note 124.

491. ***The world is built by* חסד (*ḥesed*), *love*...** Rabbi Yehudah interprets this verse as a reference to three different things at once: the sefirotic world, since *Ḥesed* is the first of the bottom seven *sefirot*—and corresponds to the first day of creation of the lower sefirotic realm; the earthly world; and the individual Jewish male—microcosm of Divinity—whose line must be *built* through procreation. The *neshamah* is called *ḥesed*, "love," because it derives from *Ḥesed*, but it actualizes its essence only through procreation.

If one has procreated and has descendants, he has "built" in the world, securing his future in eternity. Rabbi Yehudah understands *The world is built by ḥesed* as a reference to reincarnation which, in Zoharic Kabbalah, is exemplified by the results of levirate marriage.

According to the biblical custom of levirate marriage in its most forthright formulation, if a married man dies childless, his brother should marry the widow and then father a child, who will be considered the offspring of the deceased. Posthumously providing the dead man with offspring prevents his "name" from being blotted out. In Kabbalah, levirate marriage preserves not only the deceased husband's "name" but also his soul, which transmigrates into the embryo generated by the union of his widow and his brother. In the Kabbalah of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, this doctrine was still deeply esoteric; during that period, it was usually referred to only in oblique terms, as here.

On levirate marriage, see Genesis 38; Deuteronomy 25:5–10; Ruth 3–4; Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 231–32, 482–83; Eskenazi and Frymer-Kensky, *Ruth*, xxxii–viii. On the medieval context, see Katz, *Halakhah ve-Qabbalah*, 127–74; Grossman, *Pious and Rebellious*, 90–101. The English term "levirate marriage" derives from Latin *levir*, "husband's brother." The corresponding Hebrew term יבום (*yibbum*) similarly derives from יבם (*yabbam*), "husband's brother."

On reincarnation in Kabbalah, see Vol. 11, pp. 178–79, n. 430. The first extensive kabbalistic discussion of reincarnation is found in the Zoharic section titled *Sava de-Mishpatim* (*Zohar* 2:95a–113a).

On the *neshamah*'s being called *ḥesed*, see *Zohar* 2:95. Psalms 89:3 reads עולם חסד יבנה (*olam ḥesed yibbaneh*), which is normally understood to mean *Forever will love be established* but is construed midrashically as *The world is built by love*. See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 9; *Sifra, Qedoshim* 10:11, 92d; JT *Yevamot* 11:1, 11d; *Sanhedrin* 5:1, 22c; 9:1, 26d; BT *Sanhedrin* 58b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 4; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 21; *Midrash Tehillim* 89:2; *Zohar* 2:79a, 166b; 3:77a, 145b, 259b; *ZḤ* 122a (*Mat*). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:4; *Zohar* 1:230b.

The verse in Deuteronomy reads: *Should brothers dwell together and one of them die and leave no offspring, the wife of the dead man shall not become wife outside to a stranger. Her brother-in-law shall come to bed with her and take her to him as wife and carry out a brother-in-law's duty to her.*

492. ***When you go out to war...*** Deuteronomy 21:10–14 describes the treatment of a beautiful captive: *When you go out to war against your enemies and YHVH your God give him in your hand and you take captives from him, and you see among the captives a woman of comely features—and you desire her and* [*would*] *take her for yourself as wife, you shall bring her into your house, and she shall shave her head, and do her nails, and she shall take off her captive's cloak and stay in your house and lament for her father and her mother a month of days. Afterward you shall come to bed with her, and you shall cohabit with her and she shall become your wife. And it will be, if you like her not, you shall send her away on her own; but you shall certainly not sell her for silver, you shall not garner profit from her inasmuch as you have abused her.* Here, the *Zohar*

interprets the passage symbolically as a battle between the good impulse (or soul) and the evil impulse.

Zohar Ḥadash includes no commentary on the prior Torah portions in Deuteronomy except for the section called *Qav ha-Middah*, which is associated with *parashat Va-Eṯḥannan*. For that passage, see above on pp. 414–42.

Other than what follows below, the main body of the *Zohar* does not have a section that addresses *parashat Ki Tetse*.

493. **good impulse…** Rabbi Shim'on transposes Hosea's verse about Israel's faithlessness with God into a moral lesson regarding their rejection of the good impulse. The simple sense of the verse from Ecclesiastes reads: טוב (*Tov*), *Better, a poor but wise boy than an old and foolish king who no longer knows how to be wary*.

On this interpretation of the verse, see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 16; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:13; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:5; *Zohar* 1:110b (*MhN*), 179a.

494. **evil impulse…** The evil impulse is multifarious in its strategies and thus bears many names, including "enemy." The *Zohar* exhorts one who is besieged by the evil impulse to battle against it with Torah, represented in rabbinic and kabbalistic literature by "bread." Dragging the evil impulse to study Torah is a well-attested tactic against this foe.

See M *Berakhot* 9:5: "*With all* לבבך (*levavekha*), *your heart* —with both your impulses: the good impulse and the evil impulse." The word לבבך (*levavekha*) is written with the unusual double ב (*vet*), prompting the rabbis to understand it as *your hearts*. Ideally, one should serve God not only with the good impulse but also with the evil impulse—by subduing it, or by sublimating and channeling one's passions into holy deeds, thereby dedicating the raw power of the evil impulse to good ends.

On the seven names of the evil impulse, see BT *Sukkah* 52a: "The evil impulse has seven names. The blessed Holy One called it Evil…; Moses called it Uncircumcised…; David

called it Impure…; Solomon called it Enemy…; Isaiah called it Stumbling Block…; Ezekiel called it Stone…; Joel called it Hidden One.” See *Zohar* 2:262b–263a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 97. On the evil impulse as enemy, see *Zohar* 1:198a.

See BT *Sukkah* 52b: “A scholar from the school of Rabbi Yishma’el taught, ‘If this repulsive one [i.e., the evil impulse] attacks you, drag him to the house of study. If he is of stone, he will dissolve; if of iron, he will shatter.’” See *Sifrei Devarim* 43, 45; *Bereshit Rabbah* 70:8; BT *Berakhot* 5a, *Qiddushin* 30b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A 16; *ZḤ* 79b (*ST*); Satlow, “And on the Ground You Shall Sleep”; Rosen-Zvi, *Demonic Desires*, 20–25.

The simple meaning of Proverbs 9:5 is *eat my bread-food*. Here, Rabbi Shim’on engages in wordplay, interpreting *laḥamu* in terms of a homonym that means *battle* (or *fight*). See *Shemot Rabbah, Ki Tissa* 47:7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beshallaḥ* 3.

On the identification of bread with Torah, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 9; *Bereshit Rabbah* 43:6; 48:11; 54:1; 70:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:1; BT *Shabbat* 120a; *Shemot Rabbah* 25:8, 47:5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 8:9, 13:15; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:1; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 10; *Rut Rabbah* 2:1; *Qohelet Rabbah* 7:16, 10:19; *Midrash Tehillim* 34; *Midrash Mishlei* 31:14; *Eliyahu Zuta* 13; *Zohar* 1:165a; 3:58a, 236a (*RM*); *ZḤ* 83b (*MhN, Rut*). On the two impulses, see *Tosefta Berakhot* 6:7; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; *Sifrei Deuteronomy* (Finkelstein), 55; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 6:5; JT *Berakhot* 9:5,14b; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:13–14; 9:7; BT *Berakhot* 5a, 54a, 61a; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:5; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16; *Zohar* 1:12a, 49b, 144b, 155b, 165b, 174b, 178b; 2:26b, 28a, 162b–163a, 174a; 3:263b (*Piq*), 267a–268a; *ZḤ* 47a (*MhN, Rut*), 58a, 58d, 78a–b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 42–43, 101; Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, 255–63; Urbach, *The Sages*, 471–83; Boyarin, *Carnal Israel*, 64–67; Rosen-Zvi, *Demonic*

Desires, esp. 26–29, 54–58, 61–64, 72–78, 146 n. 52. Cf. JT *Sotah* 5:7, 20c.

495. **delivered into one's hand…** The aim is not to eliminate the evil impulse, just to gain control over it.

496. **Woe, woe…** Rabbi Shim'on laments the moral and spiritual catastrophe that occurs when the good impulse is overpowered by the evil impulse, citing the ironic upheavals suggested by the verse in Proverbs. Here he has reversed the previous line of interpretation, by talking about the beautiful captive of Deuteronomy 21 as a deplorable event.

The context in Proverbs 30:21–23 reads: *At three things the earth trembles, four it cannot bear: a slave becoming a king, a scoundrel sated with food, a loathsome woman getting married, and a slave-girl supplanting her mistress*.

497. **the soul…** Here the term "soul" is used interchangeably with "the good impulse." Daily life is a struggle; as the two opposing influences and their forces contest for dominance within the human being, the individual subject is constituted through daily conflict.

See BT *Berakhot* 61a: "Rav Naḥman son of Rav Ḥisda expounded, 'Why is it written ויצר (*Va-yiytser*), *And He formed, the human being…*, spelled with two *yod*s? Because the blessed Holy One created two impulses, one good and the other evil.'… Rabbi Shim'on son of Pazzi said, 'Woe is me from יוצרי (*yotsri*), my Creator; woe is me from יצרי (*yitsri*), my evil impulse!'… The sages taught, 'A person has two kidneys; one advises him to do good and one advises him to do evil. And it stands to reason that good is to his right and evil is to his left…' ''

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:4; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 2:7; *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:412); *Zohar* 1:49a, 80b (*ST*); 3:46b; Rosen-Zvi, *Demonic Desires*, 57, 74–86, 129–30.

498. **she had been cast out…** Sin alienates the soul (the latter being represented as the female captive and the *mistress*); but through aggressive action against the evil

impulse, the soul can be purified and returned to her proper place within the body.

499. **purifying herself…** Hair and nails are customarily removed, and here they symbolize the foulness associated with the original sin.

See BT *Shabbat* 145b–146a, in the name of Rav Yosef: "When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), slime [or: filth, lust]. When Israel stood at Mount Sinai, their filth ceased."

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 4:1 (per British Library MS 27031, ed. Clark); BT *Yevamot* 103b; *Avodah Zarah* 22b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 21 (and Luria's n. 7); *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 3:12; *Zohar* 1:36b–37a, 52a, 54a–55a, 63b, 122b, 126a–b, 145b, 228a; 2:167b, 193b, 231a, 236b; 3:14b, 76b, 79a, 87a; *ZḤ* 8c, 63c (*ShS*), 83a–b (*MhN, Rut*), 91d (*MhN, Eikhah*); Stroumsa, *Another Seed*, 38–53; Koren, *Forsaken*, 89–92.

500. **garments of impurity…** Holy garments were bestowed upon the people of Israel at Mount Sinai, but these were replaced by ghastly clothing when Israel sinned with the golden calf.

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ*, add. 1, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "[At Sinai] He adorned them with weapons engraved with the Ineffable Name [*YHVH*]; and as long as they possessed these, no evil could touch them—neither the Angel of Death nor anything else. As soon as they sinned [with the Golden Calf], Moses said to them: *Now take off your ornaments, and I will know what I should do with you* (Exodus 33:5). At that moment, *The people heard this evil word, and they mourned*, [*and no one put on his ornaments*] (ibid., 4). What is written? *The Children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments.*"

On Israel's ornaments, see *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 33:4, 6; *Targum, Shir ha-Shirim* 2:17; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 47; BT *Shabbat*

88a; Naḥmanides on Exodus 33:6; *Zohar* 1:52b, 63b; *ZḤ* 66d (*ShS*); Green, *Keter*, 70–71.

501. **the month of Elul…** The month of Elul is designated for weeping and *teshuvah* ("repentance") before Rosh Hashanah. According to rabbinic tradition, this month was part of the eighty days in which Moses ascended Mount Sinai after the episode of the golden calf.

Israel's faithlessness is symbolized by illicit sexual relations, applied here to disrupting the union of the divine couple—*Ḥokhmah* (the Father) and *Binah* (the Mother), thereby exposing their nakedness (or genitals) and "stripping" or depriving them of one another and of the flow from above. See above, note 357.

On Elul as part of Moses' second ascent on Mount Sinai, see *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 31; *Tanna de-vei Eliyyahu Zuta* 4; *Tosafot, Bava Qamma* 82b, s.v. *kedei*.

On the verse from Leviticus, see above, note 357. On the verse from Psalms, see *Midrash Tehillim* 119:67; Radak.

502. **Yom Kippur…** Israel's full repentance on earth is mirrored by the erotic union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* above.

Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, on Yom Kippur divine intercourse either does not occur, or it merely begins. See *Zohar* 3:100b (and *Nitsotsei Orot*, ad loc., n. 3), 214b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1271–72, n. 267; Vol. 8, p. 140, n. 251.

503. **They established a covenant…** The simple meaning of this paragraph seems fairly straightforward, but in the context of the entire passage's references to exposing nakedness and divine coupling, there appears to be an esoteric meaning, as well. In the *Zohar*, "covenant" generally refers to circumcision—the sign of the covenant. Further, references to idolatry and lying often signify the frequently criticized phenomenon of the sexual sins of the Castilian Jewish courtier class, especially of men having sexual relations with non-Jewish women.

On the sexual improprieties of Castilian Jewry, see above, note 218; Vol. 11, p. 57, n. 84. On idolatry as a reference to sexual relations with non-Jewish women, see Vol. 11, p. 94. n. 193.

The full verse in Exodus 34 reads: *He said, 'Look, I am about to seal a covenant. Before all your people I will do wonders that have not been created in all the earth and in all the nations, and all the people in whose midst you are shall see YHVH's deeds—how awesome they are—that which I do with you.'*

504. ***For on this day...*** The full verse in Leviticus 16 reads: *For on this day He will effect atonement for you* [or: *atonement will be effected for you*], *to purify you of all your sins; before YHVH you will become pure*.

505. **Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai fled...** According to rabbinic legend, an informer relayed to the authorities Rabbi Shim'on's slander against Palestine's Roman occupiers; this prompted him and his son, Rabbi El'azar, to flee for their lives. Ultimately they took shelter in a cave for thirteen years—learning Torah while subsisting on carobs and fresh spring water, both miraculously produced on their behalf.

On the story of Rabbi Shim'on and the cave, see JT *Shevi'it* 9:1, 38d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 79:6; BT *Shabbat* 33b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:16; *Esther Rabbah* 3:7; *Midrash Tehillim* 17:13; *Qohelet Rabbah* 10:8; *Zohar* 1:11a. Cf. *Zohar* 1:216b. On the cave near Lydda, see the story in *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 18:5; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 32, 148b; *Zohar* 1:244b; 3:42b, 55b (mislabeled *Tos*); *ZḤ* 20d (*MhN*); *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 1, in *TZ* 1a; Scholem, "She'elot be-Viqqoret ha-Zohar," 51–52; idem, *Major Trends*, 389–90, n. 64. On Elijah's teaching Torah, see above, note 421. Some of the printed editions of *Tiqqunei Zohar* begin with the same paragraph as the text here.

Other than what follows below, the main body of the *Zohar* does not have a section that addresses *parashat Ki Tavo*.

506. **The curses in Leviticus…** The curses in the two books differ in various respects. Here they are associated respectively with the two different Temples, their destruction, and the exile that follows each one.

The companions in the *Zohar* are very rarely depicted in a study hall; this is a notable exception.

On the differentiation between the two sets of curses, see above, note 103.

The context in Leviticus (26:42, 44) reads: *I will remember My covenant with Jacob; and also My covenant with Isaac and also My covenant with Abraham I will remember; and the land I will remember…. Yet even this, too—when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or loathe them so as to destroy them, annulling My covenant with them, for I, YHVH, am their God*.

507. **Woe for the absence of Son of Yoḥai!…** If only Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai were here! He would know the explanation for this conundrum!

Yehudah son of Il'ai is mentioned only three times in the *Zohar* (and three more in *Ra'aya Meheimna* and *Tiqqunei Zohar*). He is not one of the Companions mentioned in the gathering of the *Idra Rabba*, which contains the largest listing in the main body of the *Zohar* of members of Rabbi Shim'on's mystical fellowship. While *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* refers to many rabbis that are not included in that group, the material in this text is not part of *Midrash ha-Ne'lam*. The style here is fairly consistent with that of the main body of the *Zohar*, but the discrepancy here suggests a different author or editor for this section. See 3:12a; *ZḤ* 3a (*MhN*); *Nitsotsei Zohar* on *Tiqqunei Zohar* 17a, n. 1.

508. **Faithful Turtledove!…** The dove is distinctive among birds in that it does not mate with another bird, should its mate disappear during the season. Since the dove symbolizes the people of Israel's faithfulness to the blessed Holy One, she is a fitting messenger to implore Rabbi

Shim’on for wisdom concerning the suffering of the Jewish people, as described in the two sets of biblical curses.

See BT *Berakhot* 53b: “The Assembly of Israel is likened to a dove, as is written: *The wings of the dove are inlaid with silver, and her pinions with precious gold* (Psalms 68:14). Just as the dove is saved only by her wings, so Israel is saved only by the commandments.” On the faithfulness of the dove, see BT *Eruvin* 100b; *Zohar* 2:239a; 3:61a, 125b, 240b–241a; *ZḤ* 31c.

Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Yehudah is mentioned only two other times in the *Zohar*, and he also does not appear in the *Idra Rabba*. See previous note; *Zohar* 2:16a (*MhN*); 3:306a.

509. **I weep…** The sufferings of exile are magnified by the concealment of leadership and the concealment of esoteric understanding of the Torah. The “later generations,” of course, refers to the generation contemporaneous with the authorship of this section of *Zohar*, who long for the messianic redemption.

510. **just then, Elijah… arrived…** Elijah appears suddenly, immediately subsequent to Rabbi Shim’on’s weeping. In the *Zohar*, weeping is not only represented as a natural emotional response to the narrative’s events, but also it marks a literary turning point, after which the one crying attains mystical understanding.

According to *Sefer Yetsirah*, the world was created with thirty-two paths of wisdom. During the period of the First Temple, the people diverged from these thirty-two courses; but because those paths are hidden, the penalty was less severe and words of consolation were provided. During the period of the Second Temple, however, the people transgressed fifty-three revealed sections of the Torah; such flagrant sinfulness called for harsh punishment without a hint of its end.

On the disclosure versus concealment of transgressions and the resulting duration of punishments, see BT *Yoma* 9b in the names of Rabbi Yoḥanan and Rabbi El’azar: “In the

case of the first ones [during the First Temple era], whose sin was revealed, the end [of their punishment] was revealed. In the case of the latter ones, whose sin was not revealed, the end [of their punishment] was not revealed."

The *Zohar* is counting the unit of Leviticus 26:14–45 as the "first curses," even though verses 42 and 44 bear consoling messages. The "latter curses" are apparently restricted to Deuteronomy 28:14–66 although the literary passage continues for two more verses. On this discrepancy, see *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 9; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

In mentioning "fifty-three portions of the Torah," the *Zohar* ignores here the so-called triennial cycle of reading the Torah—which prevailed in the land of Israel and in Egypt until as late as 1170 C.E.—and follows the Babylonian practice (of an annual reading cycle), which held sway in medieval Spain. This marks a lapse in the *Zohar*'s self-presentation as a work from the tannaitic period. See *Nitsotsei Zohar*, n. 9; *Zohar* 1:104b (*MhN*) and *Nitsotsei Zohar*, ad loc.; 2:206b and *Nitsotsei Orot*, ad loc.; Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, 134–35; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 108–9, n. 11. On weeping as a literary marker in the *Zohar*, see Eitan Fishbane, "Tears of Disclosure." On weeping as a kabbalistic technique, see Idel, *Kabbalah*, 75–88; Wolfson, "Weeping, Death, and Spiritual Ascent."

511. **He fell asleep...** Sleeping is also a mystical technique, in which the practitioner goes to sleep with a vexing quandary in mind—hoping for a dream, nocturnal visitation, or vision that will resolve the dilemma. Elijah now informs him that consolation for Israel is esoterically concealed even within the curses of Deuteronomy, providing assurance that redemption will surely come.

In the rabbinic story of Rabbi Shim'on's refuge in the cave (BT *Shabbat* 33b), Elijah appears at the entry with good news. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 3a; *Midrash Mishlei* 9. On sleeping as a mystical technique, see Idel, *Mequbbalim shel*

Lailah, 9–45; Wolfson, *A Dream Interpreted Within a Dream*, index, s.v. “sleep.”

512. **even though he curses…** Elijah explains that the impetus for the torments promised in Deuteronomy 28 is Israel’s betterment. Thus even though they may appear to be harsher than those in Leviticus, the motive for the punishment is rooted in love. The theodicy offered here is counter-intuitive, but it is consistent with traditional rabbinic explanations for Israel’s suffering, called “chastenings of love.”

See BT *Berakhot* 5a: “Rava (some say, Rav Ḥisda) said, ‘If a person sees sufferings coming upon him, he should scrutinize his actions…. If he does so and finds nothing [deserving of punishment], he should attribute it to neglecting the study of Torah…. If he does so and finds no [such neglect], then these are surely chastenings of love, as is said: *For the one whom YHVH loves He reproves*, [*as a father the son he delights in*] (Proverbs 3:12).’ Rava said, in the name of Rav Saḥora, in the name of Rav Huna, ‘Whomever the blessed Holy One delights in, He crushes with sufferings, as is said: *YHVH delights in crushing him by disease*.”’

See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; *Zohar* 1:180b–181a; 2:244b. Cf. BT *Qiddushin* 40b.

513. **It is not written יעלה (*ya’aleh*), *will bring*…** Elijah creatively misreads or revocalizes the word in question. In its simple sense, יעלם (*yalem*) is a verb from the root עלי (*ʿly*) “to go up,” whose object is the suffixed pronoun ם (*-m*), *them*. However, Elijah treats the verb as if it comes from the root עלם (*ʿlm*), “to hide,” whose object is *every illness and every plague*. This yields the meaning *will hide* (or *will conceal*). The *Zohar* thus reveals that the esoteric meaning is that God, in His mercy, will incite only those plagues that have been explicitly mentioned, without surprises. In the *Zohar*, demons and other horrors are concealed in a pit on the Sabbath, and at other times when their presence is not

required; the plagues mentioned here will be ushered there during the exilic afflictions.

The simple meaning of the verse reads: *What's more*, [*as for*] *every illness and every plague that is not mentioned in this Scroll of Torah—YHVH will bring them down upon you, until you are wiped out*. Ancient Near Eastern lists often ended with statements like this verse, to indicate that the items specified were not meant to be exhaustive. That is, *will bring them* is precisely the contextual meaning of the word in question.

On the reading of the word *yalem* and its vocalization, see *Targum Onqelos*; Rashi; Ibn Ezra; *Minḥat Shai*; Tigay, *Deuteronomy*.

514. **Israel will never, ever be wiped out…** The emphatic repetition of this promise suggests a deep-seated anxiety about Israel's security, either on the part of the author or his intended audience, or both.

The verse in Isaiah reads: *For as the new heavens and the new earth that I will make shall stand before Me—declares YHVH—so shall your seed and your name stand* (Isaiah 66:22). The verse in Jeremiah reads: *Thus said YHVH, 'If the heavens above could be measured, and the foundations of the earth below could be fathomed, only then would I reject all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done.'* On discrepancies between Zoharic citations of Scripture and MT, see above, pp. 365–66, n. 136.

515. **promises and consolations…** The ultimate redemption of Israel will resemble that of the Exodus, in which the enemies were destroyed at the sea. Rather than being returned to slavery in Egypt, the true meaning of the verse reveals that at the end of days, Israel will watch their enemies being destroyed from the vantage point of ships—not as recently released slaves on foot in the desert.

On the theme of the verse in Micah, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 8; *Tanḥuma, Eqev* 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 17; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:11.

516. באניות (***Bo-oniyyot*), *In ships…*** Elijah engages in wordplay, revocalizing the word as *aniyyut, poverty*, rather than *oniyyot*, literally *ships*. In fact, the import of *bring you back to Egypt in ships* is obscure, since the original exodus did not entail ships at all. The reinterpretation suggests that while the Jews may now be suffering in penury, they will ultimately return to Egypt in grand style, and with song. Alternatively, according to *Sullam*, those who come in ships against Israel will perish at sea, and the Jewish people will sing.

In this dialogue of Elijah with Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai, Elijah is apparently refuting a teaching attributed to Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai in the ancient rabbinic writings. See *Esther Rabbah, Petiḥta* 3: "In three places the blessed Holy One warned the people of Israel not to return to Egypt.… The third, as is written: *YHVH will bring you back to Egypt in ships*. They renounced all three, and they were punished for all three.… The third in the days of Trajan. Trajan ground bones [as emended according to manuscript variants cited in *Midrash Esther Rabbah*, ed. Tabori and Atsmon], his wife gave birth on the even of the ninth of Av, and all of Israel were in mourning." See also JT *Sukkah* 5:1, 55b; *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 2.

On the imagery of the purse, see BT *Sanhedrin* 97a: "The [Messiah,] son of David, will not come until… the [last] coin has gone from the purse." See *ZḤ* 92d (*MhN, Eikhah*).

Elijah construes the noun *rinnah* in the verse from Isaiah according to its usual connotation as a shout for joy. The verse reads (according to its simple sense): *Thus says YHVH, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: 'For your sake I send to Babylon; I will bring down all* [*her*] *bars, and the Chaldeans shall raise their voice in oniyyot*'; in context, the latter word may mean *lamentation*—as perhaps in Deuteronomy 28:68, as well. This suggests yet another possible instance of Elijah's wordplay: the word אוני (*oni*), "mourning" (see Genesis 35:18; Deuteronomy 26:14; Hosea

9:4), might be construed as a singular form of *oniyyot*, judging from the similar form אֲנִיָּה (*aniyyah*) in Isaiah 29:2; Lamentations 2:5. See translator's note on *lamentation* in NJPS at Isaiah 43:14.

517. **that route…** The geographical setting is the paradigmatic site where God's power was displayed for the first exodus and for the final redemption. This teaching underscores the centrality of the material world to the *Zohar*'s worldview—a theological approach in which spiritual paradigms inhabit particular places and are enacted through particular rites.

The verse in Exodus reads: *Do not be afraid. Stand firm and see YHVH's deliverance that He will perform for you today, for as you see the Egyptians today, you will not see them again forever*.

518. **It is not written *you shall be sold*…** The unusual verb form והתמכרתם (*vehitmakkartem*), *you shall offer yourselves for sale*, is marshaled as further evidence that redemption will come just as Israel experiences despair. The Jews might imagine their plight is hopeless—and then it will become clear that no one will purchase them and none shall dominate them.

519. **all dependent upon *teshuvah*…** On *teshuvah* as a prerequisite for redemption, see above, note 350.

520. **they are uncertain…** Even those with understanding—namely, the kabbalists—who know when the end of days will occur, are wracked with doubt on account of the continuing persecution, and because redemption hinges upon the people's doing *teshuvah*. This is the meaning of *you… will have no faith in your life*—even certain knowledge feels unreliable.

521. ***the dove came back…*** The author draws upon the dove imagery in the story of Noah, in which the dove's return with an olive branch not only signals God's faithfulness to His covenant with Noah but also signifies hope for renewal of human life on earth.

On the faithfulness of the dove, see above, note 508.

522. **Where Son of Yoḥai is found...** Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai is the hero of the *Zohar* because he is the *axis mundi*, pillar of the world. He is a partner to the blessed Holy One, and his spirit animates the Companions.

Through the course of history, the figure of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai has become increasingly celebrated on account of his association with the *Zohar*, and because of his unique role in it. Many songs were written in his honor; and his purported grave in Meron, in the Galilee, is the site of pilgrimage and annual festivities on the anniversary of his death.

On God's response to the decrees of the righteous, see *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16, p. 315: "The righteous decree—and the blessed Holy One fulfills."

See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:1; *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 19; *Va'era* 3; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:20; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:4; *Zohar* 1:10a, 209a; 2:15a (*MhN*); 3:242a. Cf. BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 16b, *Bava Metsi'a* 85a; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tavo* 1; *Rut Zuta* 2:19; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:6; *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*); 2:262a (*Heikh*); 3:68a.

On the figure of Rabbi Shim'on, see BT *Sukkah* 45b, *Mo'ed Qatan* 16b; *Zohar* 1:218a, 223a; 2:15a (*MhN*), 38a, 97b; 3:59b–61b, 71b, 79b, 132b (*IR*), 159a, 206a, 241b, 296b (*IZ*); Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 1–84; Huss, *The Zohar: Reception and Impact*, 11–35; Ḥallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah bi-Tfillah, be-Halakhah, u-v-Minhag*, 507–31; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 29–61.

523. **Gleanings...** The following brief passages appear first in the Venice edition (1658) under this heading; they do not appear in known manuscripts or in Salonika (1591). These are short homiletical treatments of verses found primarily in Genesis and Exodus.

The first fragment in that section derives from the *Ra'aya Meheimna* stratum of the *Zohar*, which is not included in *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition*, as stated in Vol. 1,

p. xv, n. 2. The same passage appears in *Zohar* 2:114a (*RM*); Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 21:23. See Gottlieb, *Ha-Qabbalah be-Khitvei Rabbenu Baḥya ben Asher*, 171–72; Scholem, *ZḤ*.

524. **what was already his…** By withstanding the advances of Potiphar's wife, Joseph demonstrated his virtue and earned all the honor and glory now bestowed upon him by Pharaoh, so in a sense these accolades were already his.

The expression literally construed as *on your mouth all my people shall kiss* apparently reflects an idiomatic usage meaning "by your command (by the directives you issue) all my people shall be guided," or "to your orders all my people shall submit," or "to you all my people shall pay homage." Here, the author revocalizes the verb as a passive, to yield *all my people shall be kissed* and then quotes the line as an allusion to Joseph's *sefirah, Yesod*, who nourishes all—and from whom all souls emerge. Since Joseph had resisted a kiss, now his own kiss bestows blessing.

Joseph receives divine overflow from the *sefirot* below Holy Ancient One (another name for *Keter*), spanning *Ḥokhmah* to *Hod*—or alternatively, *Binah* to *Yesod*. These seven each contain the influence of Compassion and Judgment, representing *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*—yielding a total of fourteen streams, which matches the numerical value of the word *zahav*.

On the theme of Joseph's fitting rewards, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 90:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:9; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 12, *Miqqets* 3. On this entire homily, see *Zohar* 1:196a.

The context in Genesis (41:40–43) reads: *Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'After God has made known to you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. You shall be over my house, and on your mouth all my people shall kiss. By the throne alone shall I be greater than you.' Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.' Pharaoh removed his ring from his hand and put it on*

Joseph's hand and had him clothed in garments of linen and placed the gold chain around his neck.

525. **more than twenty cubits...** The sukkah represents *Shekhinah*, who is the repository of the ten streams of holy overflow. Each of those ten conveys a blend of Compassion and Judgment, yielding twenty streams in all; either more than twenty or less than ten streams (signifying the unified flow of Compassion and Judgment) would disrupt the proper balance within *Shekhinah*.

Generally, a "cubit" designates the distance from the elbow to the end of the middle finger; it is equivalent to six handbreadths (that is, 48 centimeters or 58 centimeters, according to two main modern halakhic opinions).

In the *Zohar* the term "Compassion" usually signifies the *sefirah Tif'eret*, but the author here uses the classical rabbinic pair of *raḥamim* and *din*—compassion and judgment respectively—to express this opposition, rather than the typical kabbalistic pairing of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*.

The term "Masters of Mishnah" appears rarely in the main body of the *Zohar* but often in *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* and in the later works *Ra'aya Meheimna* and *Tiqqunei Zohar*. "Masters of Mishnah" appears to signify a group (never formally defined) of sages possessing esoteric wisdom. In some ways, the Masters of Mishnah are a forerunner to the *Ḥavrayya*, the Companions, as headed by Rabbi Shim'on in the main body of the *Zohar*. Significantly, however, Rabbi Shim'on does not always occupy a privileged position in the present group. The Mishnah of which they are masters is not usually the classic Mishnah of the rabbinic sage Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi, but rather a body of esoteric knowledge often relating to the soul and the structure of the cosmos; however, this instance is an exception, deriving from M *Sukkah* 1:1. See Vol. 11, p. 329, n. 72.

526. **A body...** The torso of the divine anthropos is represented by the letter *vav*, whose numerical value is six (*shesh* in Hebrew). Joseph is honored with garments of *shesh*,

“linen,” because with his body he had preserved the holiness of *shesh* above.

527. **Legs that did not walk…** Since Joseph’s legs did not carry him toward Potiphar’s wife, he was carried in the chariot as reward. Since he preserved the holiness of his circumcision, he merited the sefirotic chariot (comprised of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif’eret*, and *Shekhinah*), as well as the angelic one that supports *Shekhinah*.

The full verse reads: *He had him ride in the chariot of his viceroy, and they called out before him Avrekh, setting him over all the land of Egypt*. The phrase במרכבת המשנה אשר לו (*be-mirkevet ha-mishneh asher lo*), apparently means “in the chariot of his viceroy,” but it is understood here as “in his second chariot.”

See JT *Kil’ayim* 8:2, 31c; Septuagint, *Targum Onqelos, Targum Yerushalmi*, and Rashi on Genesis 41:43; *ZḤ* 60b; Sarna, *Genesis*, ad loc.

528. **שבת (*Shabbat*), Sabbath…** The word *Shabbat* is interpreted as a *notariqon* (specifically, an anagram): the letter ש (*shin*) plus *bat*, “daughter.” The three upright prongs of the letter ש stand for the three patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; they in turn symbolize respectively the triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*. Since “Daughter” signifies *Shekhinah*, the Sabbath is not only a day in the week, but also a confluence of mystical qualities within *Shekhinah*.

On the *shin* and the patriarchs, see *Zohar* 1:2b, 224a; 2:54a, 119b, 143b, 204a; *ZḤ* 60c–d (*MhN, ShS*), 70b (*ShS*).

529. **Primal Adam cut…** Adam’s sin was to cause a rupture within the *sefirot*, between *Shekhinah* and *Tif’eret*. Abraham repaired it by planting a tree, signifying *Tif’eret*, in Beersheba, symbolizing *Shekhinah*—this planting reunites the divine couple.

Shekhinah is called באר שבע (*Be’er Sheva*), “Well of Seven,” perhaps because She receives the flow of emanation from seven *sefirot* (*Binah* through *Yesod*), or because She is both a

“well” and the “seventh” of the lower *sefirot*. See above, note 63.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *He planted a tamarisk at Beersheba, and he invoked there the name of YHVH, eternal God*.

530. **colors of the attributes…** The *Zohar* interprets the word אשל (*eshel*), *tamarisk*, as a *notariqon* (specifically, an acronym): each of its letters is the first letter of the name of one of the *Zohar*’s primary colors—אדם (*adom*), “red,” signifying *Gevurah*; שחור (*shaḥor*), “black,” apparently representing *Tif’eret*; and לבן (*lavan*), “white,” symbolizing *Ḥesed*.

On the three flocks of sheep, see above, note 247.

531. **Jacob served… for fourteen years…** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:10: *“Jacob was a simple man, dwelling in tents* (Genesis 25:27)—two tents: the academy of Shem, and the academy of Eber.” Jacob worked for his uncle Laban for fourteen years in order to acquire Leah and Rachel as wives. According to the Talmud (BT *Megillah* 17a), Jacob studied in the academy of Eber for fourteen years while hiding from Esau. This paragraph conflates explicitly or tacitly the rabbinic and kabbalistic associations of tents both with academies and with wives, as well as the fourteen years that Jacob spent in study and in working for his wives. Further, Leah and Rachel, like Jubilee and Sabbatical, represent *Binah* and *Shekhinah*, respectively. They, in turn, are both associated with seven: *Binah* as the mother of the lower seven *sefirot*, and *Shekhinah* as their culmination; this yields fourteen as well.

On Jacob studying in the academy of Shem and Eber, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 25:27; *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:10; 68:5; 84:8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayishlaḥ* 9. On “tents” signifying houses of study, see Vol. 11, p. 473, n. 332. On the symbolism of the Jubilee and Sabbatical years, see above, notes 422–25.

532. **mystery of the Name of Forty-Two Letters…** Just as the blessed Holy One used the forty-two-letter name of God to redeem the Israelites, He wanted them to fulfill forty-two expeditions to manifest this name on earth. In *gimatriyyah*, the word זה (*zeh*), *this*, equals twelve; so in order for the Israelites to complete the journey to the land of Israel as an expression of the forty-two-letter name, thirty more expeditions were required. To do so in three days required ten journeys daily.

The forty-two-letter name is mentioned in the name of Rav, though not recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. According to Jacob ben Meir Tam (Rabbenu Tam), this name consists of the first forty-two letters of the Torah, from the ב (*bet*) of בראשית (*Be-reshit*), *In the beginning*, through the ב (*vet*) of בהו (*vohu*), *empty* (or *void*) (Genesis 1:2). By this complex divine name, the world came into being. See above, note 309.

533. **Once they sinned…** All of the journeys that they undertook after the first twelve counted only as one, as a punishment for their transgression in the episode of the spies (Numbers 13–14). As a result, a total of thirty more expeditions—adding twenty-nine after all the previous ones—were added onto the first twelve.

On this paragraph, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

534. **Treasury of Souls…** This image derives from Rashi's commentary on a Talmudic passage (BT *Yevamot* 62a) in which Rabbi Assi mentions a heavenly "body" containing all souls; Rashi refers to this body as אוצר (*otsar*), "a treasure-house." In the *Zohar*, the treasure-house of unborn souls is usually located in the Garden of Eden, though it is sometimes identified with *Shekhinah*, as here.

In the cited passage from Genesis, the blessed Holy One cautioned Adam and Eve not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil—symbolizing *Shekhinah*, who is joined to *Tif'eret*—as this would constitute an attempt to gain esoteric knowledge beyond their ken.

On the treasury of souls, see 3 Enoch 43:3 (and Alexander's notes there); Rashi on *Yevamot* 62a, s.v. *mi-shum*; idem on *Yevamot* 63b, s.v. *guf*; idem on *Avodah Zarah* 5a, s.v. *ad she-yikhlu*; *Bahir* 126 (184); *Zohar* 1:119a, 181a; 2:95b, 142a, 157a, 161b, 174a, 253a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 10b–c (*MhN*), 69b (*ShS*), 85c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 93; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:696, 701–2; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 179–80, 226.

535. **[not encompassing] male and female…** The *Zohar* interprets the specification of the birth of a male as a defect—lacking the proper union of masculine and feminine potencies. Unfortunately, this is the norm since the original sin of Adam and Eve; ever since, males and females are born separately, waiting for God's favor to be reunited with their destined mate. Originally, not only were male and female souls conjoined, but their bodies as well—as was the case with the original human being, who was created androgynous.

Only if a person is virtuous does he find his proper mate; if he is not, he will join with the wrong woman and they will bring forth wicked children.

On the androgynous nature of the human being, see above, note 450.

536. **Why is the meaning of רוחי (*ruḥi*), *My spirit*?…** Is it possible to speak of the spirit of the blessed Holy One? The verse must be referring to the spirit of a man—who himself will not be judged by God, but rather only his soul. The *Zohar* revocalizes the word רוחי (*ruḥi*), *My spirit*, as *ruḥai, My spirits*, with the plural form referring to the spirits of the man and woman; since they derive from God, they are called *My spirits*. Although they may be designated as a pair, nonetheless they are always judged independently. Adam and Eve were responsible for this broken state of the world.

1. ***Tosefta*** This chapter consists of seven short passages —this first one (on 1:31b) being a mere fragment. These passages were apparently given the heading *Tosefta* ("Addendum") by the editors of the first printed texts. However, they do not bear the stylistic qualities of the Zoharic stratum called *Tosefta*. The heading *Tosefta* was one of several titles used by kabbalists and printers to refer to sections of *Zohar* that scribes had not bound together previously with larger sections. (Other such headings include *Matnitin*, Our Mishnah; *Sitrei Torah*, Secrets of Torah; and Midrash of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai.) None of these passages appear in the extant manuscripts. See Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 216; Gottlieb, *Studies in the Kabbalah Literature*, 163–214; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:3; Abrams, "The '*Zohar*' as Palimpsest," 40–41; Vol. 11, pp. xiii–xiv.

2. **בראשית ברא (*Bereshit bara*), *In the beginning...*** This passage appears at 1:31b. The fragment interprets the first verse of the Torah, almost word by word, as a linear code for the ten *sefirot*. *Reshit, Beginning*, is a standard cognomen for *Ḥokhmah*; and the author construes the verse to mean that an unnamed subject—alluding to *Keter*—began creating, using the instrument of *Reshit, Beginning*. Understood as the object of the verb *bara*, the noun *Elohim* is signifying *Binah*—the first *sefirah* emanated from *Ḥokhmah*.

The tiny word את (*et*) is technically an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. Already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Usually in the *Zohar*, את (*et*) becomes a name of *Shekhinah*. Here, however, the word's two letters designate *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, for the *et* serves as the particle introducing *shamayim, heavens*—a standard cognomen for *Tif'eret*, which blends *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. The three letters of ואת (*ve-et*) represent the three *sefirot Netsaḥ,*

Hod, and *Yesod*, and this particle introduces *arets*, which regularly symbolizes *Shekhinah* (*Malkhut*).

On these sefirotic associations, see *Zohar* 1:15a, 256b (*Hash*). On the word *et*, see above, p. 553, n. 138.

3. **circumcised but did not uncover…** In the rabbinic ritual of circumcision, first the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing a mucous membrane, which is then torn down the center and pulled back, revealing the corona. The act of tearing and pulling back the membrane is called פריעה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering," the corona. The two acts of *milah* and *peri'ah* signify *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, respectively, so the two rites are crucial for unification of the Divinity. These two *sefirot* are further symbolized by the series of pairs here. Throughout the *Zohar*, the act of circumcision is one of the most important rites, since it makes Jewish male embodiment the truest manifestation of the blessed Holy One, and because it distinguishes Jews from Gentiles.

In the Muslim circumcision rite, as represented in the *Zohar*, the foreskin is removed but the corona is not uncovered. Given such a distinction, this text may have an anti-Islamic valence.

See Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (67): "Understand: the mystery of the covenant is the path of the basic principle of faith. When the foreskin is removed from the covenant—this is the mystery of faith. Yet the removal of the foreskin to enter into the mystery of faith is possible only once one performs *peri'ah* (uncovering), revealing the corona. When one reaches the corona, one enters into the mystery of the path of faith and is bound to faith."

The quotation at the beginning of the paragraph is from M *Shabbat* 19:6. On *milah* and *peri'ah*, see BT Shabbat 137b; *Zohar* 1:13a, 32a–b, 93b, 96b, 98b (*ST*), 238b; 2:3b, 40a, 57b, 60b–61a, 66b, 86b–87a, 125b; 3:91b, 95b, 163a; *ZḤ* 66b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 133; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 228. On *peri'ah*, see Kiener, "The Image of Islam in the *Zohar*," 56*–60*; Wolfson, "Woman—The

Feminine as Other," 186–87. On the sign of circumcision and *Shekhinah*, see Vol. 11, p. 657, n. 81. On the mystical meanings of circumcision, see Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48, 140–55.

4. **The rabbis said...** In the Cremona edition, this passage appears in the middle of a dialogue on 1:37a of the standard editions and does not bear the heading *Tosefta*. Mantua, however, provides that title and separates this section from the flow found in Cremona.

5. ***Nephilim...*** According to ancient legend, the angels Uzza and Aza'el opposed the creation of Adam and Eve, fell from heaven, and were attracted by *the daughters of men* (Genesis 6:2).

See 1 Enoch 6–13; Jubilees 5:1–8; *Targum Yerushalmi* on Genesis 6:4; BT *Yoma* 67b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 34; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 22; *Shemḥazi ve-Aza'el* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 4:127–28); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot Literature*, §8; Rashi on *Niddah* 61a, s.v. *benei aḥi'ah*; *Zohar* 1:9b, 19b, 23a (*TZ*), 25a–b (*TZ*), 37a, 37a (*Tos*), 55a, 58a, 126a, 133b; 2:112b, 178b–179a (*SdTs*); 3:60b, 144a (*IR*), 194a, 207b–208b, 212a–b, 233a–b; *ZḤ* 81a–b (*MhN, Rut*); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 1:147–51; 4:169–72; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 631–32; Bamberger, *Fallen Angels*; Reed, *Fallen Angels*. Cf. Testament of Solomon 6:1–4; Orlov, *Dark Mirrors*, 47–81.

The biblical context (Genesis 6:2, 4) reads: *The sons of God saw that the daughters of humankind were beautiful, and they took themselves wives, whomever they chose.... The Nephilim* [*or: fallen ones*] *were on earth in those days—and afterward as well—when the sons of God came in to the daughters of humankind, who bore them children. These are the heroes of old, men of renown*.

6. **reduced his punishment by half...** After Cain murdered his brother Abel, God informed him that his punishment would consist of two parts: נע ונד (*na ve-nad*), *wavering and wandering*. Midrashic interpretation plays on the name of Cain's destination, *Nod*, explaining that after

Cain's repentance, only the *nad, wandering*, part of his punishment remained.

On the reduction of Cain's punishment, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 22:13; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:5; BT *Sanhedrin* 37b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:11; *Pesiqta Rabbati*, addendum 1:3, 199b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eliezer* 9, p. 171; *Midrash Tehillim* 100:2; *ZḤ* 19d (*MhN*).

7. **this is the power of *teshuvah*...** The plain meaning of the verb להודות (*le-hodot*) from the verse in Psalms is *to praise*, but it can also mean *to confess*. According to rabbinic tradition, this psalm was authored by Adam, and here his recital of it is explained as being part of his own repentance.

On Adam as uttering this psalm, see *Midrash Tehillim* 92:3, *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19; see also *Bereshit Rabbah* 22:13; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:5; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:11; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 25; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:7; 100:2; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 46; *Zohar* 2:138a.

8. **Why *Noah Noah*—twice?...** The spiritual activities of every righteous person are manifest in both earthly and heavenly realms. The *Zohar* interprets God's repetition of the names of some biblical heroes as if they had two spirits.

The full verse in Genesis 6 reads: *These are the offspring of Noah—Noah was a righteous man; he was wholehearted, in his generation; Noah walked with God*. That is, in its simple sense, this passage does not repeat the name in question as the other cited passages do. Rather, although the two instances of Noah's name are juxtaposed, they appear in separate clauses.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 2:6, in the name of Rabbi Abba son of Kahana: "He whose name is repeated exists in [or: will inherit] two worlds." Cf. Vol. 8, pp. 400–402, nn. 281–84.

9. **his this-worldly soul departed...** When Abraham bound Isaac upon the altar as a sacrificial offering to God, Isaac's soul flew off, as if he had died. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi*

Eli'ezer 31, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah: "When the sword touched his neck, the soul of Isaac flew off and departed, but when He caused His voice to be heard from between the two cherubim, saying, '*Lay not your hand upon the lad*' (Genesis 22:12), his soul returned to his body, Abraham set him free, and Isaac stood upon his feet. And Isaac knew of the resurrection of the dead from the Torah—that all the dead will be resurrected in the future. He opened, saying, 'Blessed are You, O Lord, who revivifies the dead.'" Here, Isaac utters the blessing "Who Resurrects the Dead"—second blessing of the daily *Amidah*—but only Isaac's supernal soul returned; and he lived the rest of his life as if he existed only in the heavenly realm. See also *ZḤ* 20d (*MhN*).

According to rabbinic tradition, the blessed Holy One attaches His name only to the dead, since the living might still sin—*He puts no trust even in His holy ones*. An exception was made for Isaac, since he was considered as if he were dead on account of the cessation of his evil impulse. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 94:5; *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 7; on Genesis 28:13, *Bereshit Rabbati* (in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai) and Rashi. Cf. below, note 21.

10. **since he was righteous...** Scripture states his name twice in a row as a sign of his praiseworthiness, but in any other generation his righteousness would have been dwarfed by others who were superior.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 30:9, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah: "In his generation he was righteous, but if he had lived in the generations of Moses or Samuel, he would not have been righteous." See BT *Sanhedrin* 108a; *Tanḥuma, Noaḥ* 5; *Zohar* 1:67a; *ZḤ* 23a–b (*MhN*).

11. **what he achieved...** This explanation for the "doubling" of Noah's name counters the previous approach, acknowledging the extra challenge of being righteous when surrounded by wicked people. This approach to Noah's

righteousness is attested also in *Bereshit Rabbah* 30:9, in the name of Rabbi Neḥemiah.

12. ***YHVH appeared to him…*** Circumcision is the embodied medium through which prophets attain visions of God.

On the link between circumcision and theophany, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 48:2; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29; *Zohar* 1:91a–b, 97b–98b; *ZḤ* 72d; Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48.

13. **Mamre, you have counseled him…** Why does Scripture specify that Abraham performed the act of circumcision *by the terebinths of Mamre*? On account of Mamre's encouragement to Abraham to undertake the rite even at his advanced age.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 41:8; *Midrash Aggadah* 14:13; 18:1; *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 3.

14. **[3:55b]** Another, short passage labeled *Tosefta* at *Zohar* 3:54b–55a appears also as the beginning of a passage from *Ra'aya Meheimna* that starts at *Zohar* 3:256a. *Ra'aya Meheimna* is a later stratum of the *Zohar* that is not included in *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition*.

15. **Rabbi El'azar and his father-in-law, Rabbi Yose…** According to rabbinic tradition, Rabbi El'azar's father-in-law was named Rabbi Shim'on son of Yose son of Lekonya. The *Zohar* consistently switches father and son, transforming Shim'on son of Yose into Yose son of Shim'on. See JT *Ma'aserot* 3:8, 50d; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:11; *Devarim Rabbah, Ki Tavo* 7:11; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:20; *Zohar* 1:5a, 61b; 3:84b, 188a, 193a; *ZḤ* 7d, 10d, 14a, 22c (all *MhN*); Halperin, *Seder ha-Dorot*, s.v. *Shim'on ben Yose ben Lekonya*.

In BT *Bava Metsi'a* 85a, the name of Rabbi El'azar's brother-in-law is given as Rabbi Shim'on son of Issi (Yose) son of Lekonya, which would make Yose his father-in-law, as in the *Zohar*—but nowhere in rabbinic literature is he named Yose son of Shim'on.

Usha was a town in Lower Galilee. Lydda (or Lod) is located in the coastal plain. On journeying from Usha to Lydda, see *Zohar* 2:5a (*MhN*), 36b; 3:122a, 240a. Cf. *Nitsotsei Zohar* on 2:169b, n. 11. On the verse from Genesis, see *Zohar* 1:165b–166a; 3:298a. For a detailed analysis of this story, see Liebes, "Terein Urzilin de-Ayyalta," 148–60.

The story that follows appears in a slightly longer version in *Zohar Ḥadash* 20d (*MhN*); see Vol. 10, pp. 225–28.

16. **Two fawns of the doe...** The identity of the voice emerging from the cave is not stated. As becomes clearer below, it may be the voice of Rabbi Shim'on, the voice of *Shekhinah*, or perhaps a *bat qol* (which is the usual rabbinic characterization for disembodied voices).

The enigmatic statement derives from Song of Songs 4:5 (see also 7:4): *Your breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, grazing in a field of lilies*. Though the identity of the doe is readily apparent, i.e., *Shekhinah*, the identity of the two fawns is not yet revealed.

The mysterious voice emerges from the cave of Lydda. According to rabbinic tradition, a cave figured prominently in the lives of Rabbi El'azar and his father, Rabbi Shim'on: when Palestine's Roman occupiers sought to execute Rabbi Shim'on for criticizing the government, he hid from the authorities in a cave together with his son for thirteen years.

On the story of Rabbi Shim'on and the cave, and on the cave near Lydda, see above, p. 688, n. 505. On the mysterious voice in the cave here, see Liebes, "Terein Urzilin de-Ayyalta," 152.

17. **We heard but do not understand!** Rabbi El'azar is frustrated by the voice's message, which conceals as much as it reveals.

18. **They were Abraham and Isaac** The two fawns of the doe signify Abraham and Isaac, and they are the *angels*

who appeared to Jacob on his return to the land of Israel. The meaning of the mysterious statement: “Two fawns of the doe fulfilled My pleasurable desire before Me” thus appears to be: When Abraham and Isaac greeted Jacob, *Shekhinah* joined with them, granting Her pleasure.

19. **He fell prostrate and beheld the image of his father…** Rabbi El’azar performs a prostration (a dramatic gesture that in the *Zohar* is often followed by prophetic or mystical revelation) and sees his father, Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai (cf. *Zohar* 1:4a; *ZḤ* 25c (*MhN*)). It thus seems that this story takes place after Rabbi Shim’on’s death, and that the cave of Lydda (and not the cave near Meron as per *Zohar* 3:296b) is the presupposed site of his burial. Rabbi El’azar is still perplexed by the voice’s message: how is it possible that Isaac was one of the angels who visited Jacob? After all, he was still alive when this happened!

20. **take out your note…** That is, take out the note on which you wrote down what the voice said—and now add what I tell you. Alternatively, accept the words that you heard, which fell to you like a message from the sky.

In any case, Rabbi Shim’on clarifies and extends the voice’s statement—the souls of the departed righteous manifest as angels assisting the righteous on earth. See *Zohar* 1:7a on Hamnuna Sava: “virtuous ones of that world come to them.”

The phrase “a mouth speaking grandly” derives from Daniel’s dream-vision (7:8, 20); cf. *Zohar* 2:178b (*SdTs*). Either Rabbi Shim’on is saying this about the *Shekhinah*, the source of the voice, or alternatively about himself.

On the souls of the righteous as ministering angels, see *Zohar* 1:100a, 129b; *ZḤ* 10a, 19a, 20d, 21a (all *MhN*); *TZ, Haqdamah*, 16b.

21. **his holy soul had been taken…** Isaac—who was still alive when Jacob returned to the land of Israel—nonetheless could have appeared to him as a soul transformed into an angel, given that his soul had departed

decades earlier when his father Abraham bound him upon the altar.

See also *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:10: "[*When Isaac was old*] *and his eyes had become too dim to see* (Genesis 27:1)… as a result of that spectacle; for when our father Abraham bound his son upon the altar, the ministering angels wept, as is written: *Behold, the Erelim cried outside*, [*angels of peace weep bitterly*] (Isaiah 33:7). Tears dropped from their eyes into his, and left their mark upon them, and so when he became old his eyes dimmed.… Another interpretation.… When our father Abraham bound his son on the altar, he raised his eyes heavenward and gazed upon the *Shekhinah*.… The blessed Holy One said, 'If I slay him now, I will make Abraham, My friend, suffer; instead I decree that this one's eyes should be dimmed.'" See also *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 31 (cited above, note 9), in which Isaac's soul departs. Note that the *Zohar* here combines both midrashim: Isaac loses his sight because his soul departed.

On "Fear of Isaac," see Rashi on Genesis 31:42: "He did not want to say 'God of Isaac' because the blessed Holy One does not associate His name with the righteous during their lifetime. Even though God said to Jacob when he was departing Be'er Sheva: *I am YHVH, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac* (Genesis 28:13), this was because Isaac's eyes were dim and he might therefore be regarded as dead. Jacob, however, feared to say [so—and instead said *Fear of Isaac*.]" See *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 7, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "The blessed Holy One does not associate His name with the righteous during their lifetime." See also Naḥmanides on Genesis 31:42.

Apparently Rabbi Shim'on intends that Isaac's liminal status—alive yet soulless, as indicated by his dim eyes—is what enabled Jacob to swear by his name. Jacob's oath thus proves that Isaac's soul was already on high.